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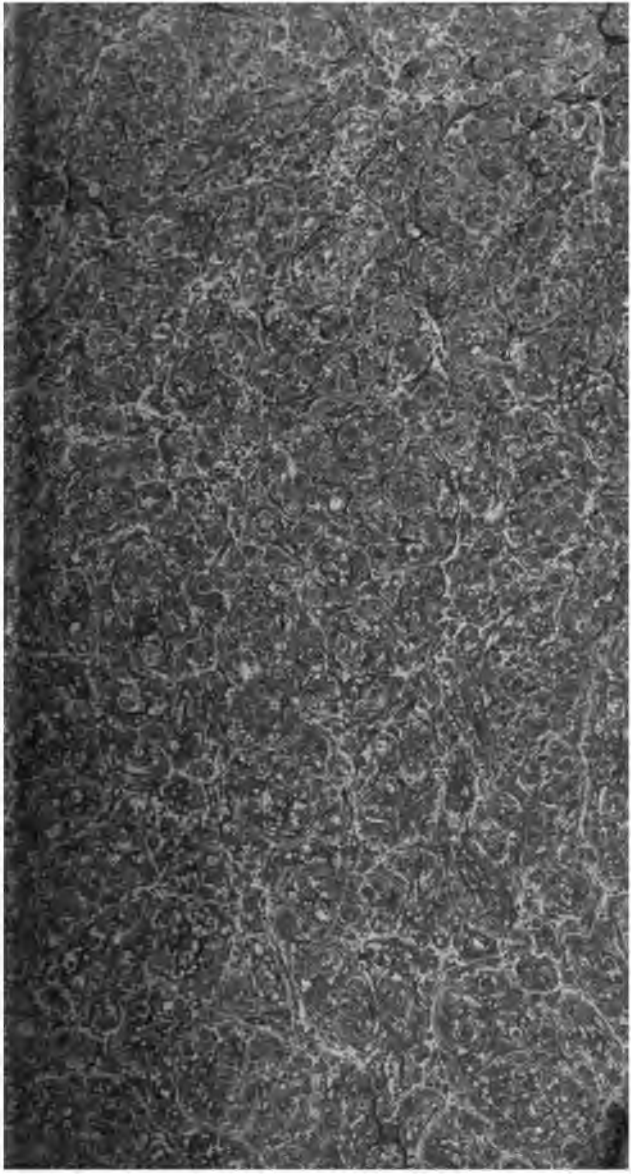

TRAVELS

IN

TURKEY, ITALY,

AND

RUSSIA,

During the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, & 1806.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

SOME OF THE GREEK ISLANDS.

BY

THOMAS MACGILL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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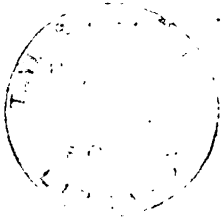

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LETTER XXIII.

English Ambassador's Audience with the Sultan.—Procession of the British Inhabitants.—Apartment.—Repast.—Payment of the Janizaries.—Guards of the Sultan.—Selim III.—Entertainment at the Ambassador's.

Constantinople, 1806.

DURING my absence in Russia, his Excellency Mr. Arbuthnot, our new ambassador at the Porte, arrived in Constantinople; yesterday he had his audience

with the Sultan, which, as the mode of conducting it was somewhat singular, I shall describe to you.

Yesterday morning, by five o'clock, the whole of the British at the time in Constantinople repaired to the palace of the Swedish envoy, where his Excellency our ambassador waited for them, to proceed to his audience with the Sultan: before six the whole procession was in motion; the ambassador was carried in a chair by six men in red robes, with high hairy caps on their heads; on each side of the chair walked one of his Excellency's armed attendants, namely, his hussar and his sportsman; the chair was followed by another, which was empty, and then by the secretaries, dragomen, and gentlemen and factors, who happened to be then in the country.

In this manner we proceeded to the water side at Tophana, where boats were

provided for us by order of the Porte, to carry us across to the Golden Horn, where when we arrived, we found horses from the stud of the Sultan waiting to convey us to the seraglio: after some little ceremonies we again set forward for the Sublime Porte; before entering it, we all alighted, and proceeded onward between the gates; the outer and inner ones were then shut, and information was sent to the Divan, that an infidel ambassador was without, who wished to throw himself at the feet of the Great Sultan. The place in which we were inclosed is that where criminals are decapitated, and where the heads of traitors are exposed for the satisfaction of the Sultan. After a short time the inner gate was thrown open, and an exhibition truly novel presented itself; a great number of dishes of pillau and cakes of bread were strewed on the ground at appropriate distances, which, at a signal given, a troop of janizaries ran in in the nimblest manner, and carried off. On

enquiry, I found that this grotesque spectacle was intended to shew to us infidels in what manner the Turkish troops are fed, and also how active they are.

At length we were permitted to advance, and after crossing an exterior court of the seraglio, arrived at the entrance of the divan, near the door of which were exposed on the ground the presents brought by the ambassador, in order to gain or secure the friendship of the Turks; amongst these were several pieces of fine cloth, some of rich silk, a table clock, and many other articles.

Here his Excellency presented his credentials to the Vizir, who by some gentlemen of the long robe sent them to the Sultan to know his pleasure. The interval between this and the arrival of the answer was employed by us in examining and admiring the magnificence of the apartment in which we were, and which was

richly gilt and painted on the roof and columns; the floor was of variegated marble, around the room were sophas covered with costly stuff; in the middle of the side opposite the door, upon a cushion more elevated than the rest, sat the Vizir; over his head we observed the little window covered by a thick grating, at which it is said the Sultan sits to hear what passes on occasions of this kind. It was evident to perceive through the grating that some person sat there, but conjecture alone could lead us to conclude that it was Selim.

A gracious answer from the Sultan at length arrived, which was received with a shout of "Long live the King of Kings, Selim the Sultan of Sultans." Here every one arose, even his Highness the Vizir slipt from his throne, and met the bearer half way to the door; the order was delivered into his hands, he first kissed it, then placed it to his forehead, kissed it

again, and then, and not till then, presumed to break the seals; the order was to feed, wash, and clothe the infidels, and then admit them to his presence. In a short time, some little stools were arranged in different parts of the divan, on the top of which were placed large trays of gold and silver, about four feet diameter, and of a circular form, from which we were to be fed at the expense of the Turks. A most sumptuous entertainment was served up; first, a kind of blancmanger, next, different kinds of roasted and baked meats; sweetmeats followed, and to conclude, a delicious cooling sherbet was handed round in gold and silver basons.

We experienced one grievous want at this feast, for we were not furnished either with knife or fork, and were obliged to tear in pieces whatever was set before us; for the articles of a liquid kind, spoons of tortoise-shell, studded with gold, were handed to us.

The eating part of the farce being over, perfumed water was poured on the hands of his Excellency, and a napkin of rich embroidery was thrown to him to wipe them with; he was farther perfumed with aloes wood and ambergris.

The usual ceremony of paying the janizaries takes place in general after this part of the audience, but his Excellency had, I suppose, expressed himself sufficiently satisfied of the riches of the Sultan, and it was dispensed with.

I happened to be in Constantinople at a former period, when two senators of Ragusa came to pay their tribute to the Porte, and was present at their audience, when the usual entertainment for the ambassadors, of paying the janizaries, was gone through, a description of which may perhaps amuse you. On quitting the divan, the senators and suite were conducted to a place in the court immediately

opposite to the door of it, where seats were prepared for their reception; the servants of the Porte then brought out a number of leathern purses, which were strewed on the ground, and supposed to contain the pay of one company; the colonel of the company then gave the word, upon which the men came running forward, snatched up the purses, and carried them to some other quarter, where they divided them; this they repeated again and again: at the audience of the Ragusans it lasted upwards of an hour and a half; at that of Lord Elgin, this farce continued some hours, when his Lordship, with just indignation, declared, that if it was not concluded immediately, he would return home.

We were now marched to a kind of open room under the piazzas, where coffee was served, and where the infidels were clothed in a manner suitable to their making their appearance before the sub-

lime Sultan; this dress consisted of pelisses; that of his Excellency was lined with samour, worth no small sum; those for the secretaries were very good; the dragomen, who generally take care of themselves, having in some measure the arrangement of this part of the business, were served with a pelisse each, little inferior to that of the ambassador; the others were of trifling value.

To the presence of the Sultan only fourteen can be admitted, and they must be unarmed; so here his Excellency, and those who wore swords, unbuckled: we now passed to the gate of the second court, where we encountered the first guard of eunuchs. This guard was composed of the ugliest monsters that ever wore the human form; their features were horrible, with the flesh depending from them; their faces were of the most deadly hue. Each infidel was now

adorned with two eunuchs, who laid a paw on each shoulder, to signify when he was to bend before the King of Kings, and also to prevent outrage in his presence; in this manner we promenaded the second court, and were soon ushered into the august presence.

The Sultan was sitting on a bed, for his throne has the appearance of a large four-posted bed, indeed it is exactly of that shape; the posts were inlaid with precious stones; the cushion on which Selim sat was composed of a massy embroidery of pearls; before him stood his boots, beside him lay his sword, and some turbans of state with rich aigrettes in them.

Selim is a man of about forty-three years of age, his beard is become grisly, his countenance is attractive, the tout ensemble of his physionomy benign; he never

lifted his eyes, nor even gave a side glance; the ambassador made a polite speech to him, which the Prince Marwze, first dragoman at the Porte, translated to the Vizir, who repeated it to the Sultan; he made his reply in simple, kind, and elegant expressions; it was likewise spoken to the Vizir, who passed it to the prince, who then repeated it to the British Company's dragoman, and he to the ambassador. Our audience being finished, we turned to depart, still in our humiliating condition, like criminals; the Sultan, just as we were leaving the room, desired the dragoman to inform his Excellency, that he had ordered him a horse, which he hoped would turn out a good one: his Excellency thanked him, and we departed. A strong guard of janizaries attended during the whole of the procession.

Our return from the audience was

nearly the same as our entry. We passed over the outward court of the seraglio, and without the Porte found our horses in waiting, where we had left them. As we crossed the water, several British and Maltese vessels saluted us; indeed they had done so in the morning. We conducted the ambassador to the Swedish palace, and were refreshed with lemonade, sweet cakes, &c.: the party then broke up to meet again at Tarapea, the residence of Mr. Arbuthnot, where we were invited to dinner. In the evening we had a ball.

The audience upon the whole was grand, and came up in a great measure to my expectations. It was humiliating, to be sure, to be kept like prisoners so long in that horrible place the Porte, and had we understood the language, the being treated with "infidel" at every corner would have been insufferable. But

the manners of the Turks, in every stage of the business, was friendly and kind. They have a greater regard for the English than for any other nation, both for those in the distinguished employments, and for the mercantile part of them: ever since the affair of Egypt, they talk of Nelson, Sir Sidney, their old acquaintance, whom they will tell you they have seen, and General Stewart, with delight and enthusiasm. They highly respect the mercantile world, and say the word of an Englishman is as good as any other man's writing, who is not a mussulman.

The dinner at Tarapea consisted of all that taste could display, or the appetite desire; the rarities of the season were washed down in libations of the choicest wines; the party was elegant, but not gay. We were deprived by her indisposition of the presence of the amiable and beautiful ambassadress; the sickness of

his beloved consort threw a gloom over his Excellency, who, notwithstanding, strove to appear cheerful: in the evening, however, we found her adorning the drawing-room, where were also the ambassadors of the other missions and their ladies, with most of the ladies and gentlemen attached to them, who had been invited to pay their court on this occasion. According to the eastern custom, coffee and sweetmeats were served up, and the ball commenced by those who chose to dance leading their partners to the hall, where a band of music was playing. Rooms were prepared for those who chose to play at cards. During the evening, ices and lemonade were handed round; the dance continued with much vivacity until some hours after midnight, when the party returned to their respective homes.

The moon shone bright, and shed a

charming lustre over the mountains, crowned with the gloomy cypress; the most death-like stillness reigned over the canal, interrupted only by the fall of the oar, which beat in agreeable cadence to the breast, which had been agitated with the dance, or with some softer emotion, for the scene of the evening afforded a rich display of beauty.

The contrast was striking between the elegant simplicity of the English dress, and the gaudy shew of the Grecian. Her Excellency was attired in a plain, but costly suit; the other ladies were decked out in rich furred gowns of silver, gold, or rich silk stuffs, and all the family diamonds were displayed on this occasion, stuck on without either art or elegance.

The ambassador appeared in the evening in the Windsor uniform; his

dress in the morning was rich embroidery. The gentlemen of the other missions wore the uniform of their respective Courts.

LETTER XXIV.

Turkish Character.—Manners.—Mode of Prayer.—Respect to Seniority.—Character contrasted with that of other Men.—Women.—Mode of Dress.—Men.—Dress in general.—Longevity.—Respect to a particular class of People.

Constantinople, 1806.

The Turkish character has been frequently delineated, and is actually but little known. The Turks are represented as brutal, barbarous, and ferocious; in some respects I must confess they are so, but these bad qualities arise from two causes: first, their religion, which absurdly makes them regard all those who are not Mussulmen, as infidels, next, their having

constantly under their eyes the subtle Jew, and the perfidious Greek, both of whom, from their knavery, they are led to despise and hate; the few Franks whom they see exclusive of them, they regard with the same contempt. Now that the Europeans begin to be better known, they speak of our heroes with rapture, and of our merchants as men of faith.

But excepting this haughtiness of carriage, of which they can seldom divest themselves, the Turks are generous, humane, which their law teaches them to be, and very charitable; they in general do what good they can during their life, and many of them, at their death, leave large sums for benevolent purposes.

Now that learning begins to be diffused throughout the empire, it is to be hoped that many of their faults will be buried with their ignorance.

The slaves in Turkey are healthy and good-looking; slavery in this country, so much dreaded by the nations around, is nothing to what they themselves inflict. The Turks will not believe that in other countries, slaves are driven out like cattle to work beneath a scorching sun, and that on their return they are fed with a rotten herring; the bare idea of this would shock them; they are strict, and at times even punish their slaves with death, when they merit it, but they seldom or never inflict pain when it is avoidable; and it is to be hoped that they will never take example by our enlightened Britons in the western world.

To the brute creation they pay what may be called a foolish attention, and carry it even to the extreme of absurdity; of this the innumerable quantity of dogs in their streets furnishes a striking example: each of these dogs belongs to one particular person, but they are fed by all,

and they seem to know that the Turks are their friends, for they bark at, and molest every body else. Cats are also great favourites with the Turks. Their horses, asses, and oxen, all look better than those in any other country. They are likewise partial to birds, and have a great veneration for some particular kinds of them, which they treat with great tenderness.

The manners of the Orientals are soft and seducing: the Turkish salute is elegant and expressive; they lay their right hand on the heart, raise it to the lips, and then to the forehead, meaning to say that the heart, the lips, and the head, or the seat of knowledge, are at your devotion.

The mode of prayer among the Turks is solemn and devout, and, as I have mentioned before, without the least tincture of Pharisaical pride in it, although their devotions are frequently performed in the open air, and in the midst of a multitude.

They pray with their faces toward Mecca, as Daniel did of old, with his toward Jerusalem. The first part is said standing, with the hands lifted up; they then kneel, kiss the ground, and touch it several times with their foreheads; afterwards they sit on their knees, and pray and chaunt; previous to this they wash their feet, hands, and face.

Distinction of rank seems, in a great measure, unknown among them, excepting that attached to those who are officers of state; and the utmost submission and respect are paid to those who have the seniority in age, not only by their family, but by the people in general.

An elder brother is considered as a superior, and has, on all occasions, the preference. When I was last at Smyrna, as I was taking a walk, I met the Musalim going out to meet his brother, who was coming to pay a visit to that part of the coun-

try. The Musalim was much the greater man of the two; he was possessed of influence and riches; his brother was a man of rather a low station in life, and came with only one armed servant as a guide, but he was several years older. The Musalim had a guard of twelve horsemen; when he came near his brother he dismounted from his horse, as did also the whole of his guards; he approached with respect, and kissed his brother's hand, who then made him re-mount, and they rode side by side to town. It is generally said, that if the father is dead, the younger brother serves the elder at table, but this I do not believe; where I had an opportunity of observing, slaves were the attendants.

The Turks have many vices, and some are vindictive and brutal; but bad men are to be found in every country; they, are, however, fast emerging from that state of darkness which has been the nursery of their errors. It is not to be wondered at,

that people surrounded by slaves, and those artful wretches, the Jews and Greeks, which is the case with the Turks, should be haughty and supercilious; this is universal in every country under similar circumstances. But will any one say that the Turks are worse than many of our countrymen who have spent a few years in the West Indies, with this difference, that the Turks have always the same abject conduct before their eyes, whereas, our countrymen have been in general educated in a religion, of which humanity and humility are the leading principles: under a government where oppression is punishable: and in a society, where the brutal manners which they acquire abroad, are abhorred and despised. The Turk passes his leisure hours in his Haram, enjoying soft music, the elegant dance, and all the sweets of love. The West Indian spends his leisure hours in drunkenness, and in the gratification of the most beastly sen-

suality; his heart, which was once tender, becomes obdurate and cruel: the mind, once cultivated and raised to the admiration of God and his works, becomes callous, and returns to a state worse than that of nature; his God is neglected, and his fellow-creatures despised; he becomes despicable himself, and thinks that all men are so likewise.

From a point of religion, the women in Turkey have their faces covered; no man, but their husband or master, if they are slaves, is allowed to see them; indeed their whole figure is concealed, being enveloped in a loose cloak called a Ferragee, which sweeps the ground; the head is clothed with three pieces of muslin, one comes over the eyes and down to the point of the nose; the second covers the chin and ears, and hangs down over the neck; and the third is thrown loosely over the head, pinned at the chin, and falls over the

shoulders; the limbs and feet are shrouded in long trowsers, to which are sewed a sort of boots of yellow leather, and on the feet they wear slippers, or rather sandals, as they consist only of a sole, and an upper part just sufficient to hold the toes.

The Turkish fair are said to be very amorous; before their tyrants, however, they set a strict watch over their conduct, but I have more than once seen a beautiful Circassian shew her face when none but a christian was near; and were not the laws put in execution so rigidly in Turkey, they would find many admirers among the Franks; but on the detection of any amour with an infidel, the woman is tied in a sack and thrown into the sea, and her lover is beheaded.

When a Turkish lady is pretty, she endeavours, by every art, to heighten her beauty; they paint the cheeks, the eye-

lashes, and eye-brows; they have fine teeth, as they eat nothing which can injure them, and they keep them clean by chewing mastic. If we may judge of them by the men, they must be very handsome; these are in general well made, they have fine limbs, and justly proportioned bodies; they have good faces, which are hidden beneath their dark beards and whiskers, and they have fine full eyes.

The easy dress of the Turks must be very conducive to health, they have nothing tight about them; their clothes hang from the shoulder, or are fastened round the middle with a girdle or shawl; their shirts, which are made of a sort of crape, have neither collar nor wristband; they wear nothing round the neck; and as their trowsers, which are remarkably loose, are sewed to their yellow leather boots, or stockings, they have no bandage round the knee.

The only absurdity in the Turkish dress, is the turban, which is truly inconvenient, in whatever shape it is used; it is argued, however, from their submitting to wear this incumbrance for such a length of time, that the climate makes it necessary to keep the head warm. I may affirm, without exaggeration, that some of these turbans are as heavy as half an English hundred weight.

There are frequent instances of longevity in Turkey; an hundred, or even one hundred and ten years, is no uncommon age. The people live sparingly, and commit no excess, either in eating or drinking. Women with child are held in very great respect by the Turks. From the fineness of the climate they frequently dine in the open air; and if by chance a female passes by whilst they are eating, she is immediately invited to partake with them; in case of her refusal, lest she should be with child,

and her offspring endangered by her longing for something which she may have seen at the table, a slave is immediately dispatched to follow her, and a portion of every dish is set apart, and sent after her, of which she is humbly intreated to accept.

LETTER XXV.

Danger of Travelling near Constantinople. —Assassination of a German Courier.— Robbery and murder of Mr. Wood and his Janizary.—Escape of his Greek Servant.—Instance of attachment in his Dog. — Particulars respecting British Couriers in Turkey.

Constantinople, 1806.

I HAVE now to address you on a very melancholy subject, as it falls to my lot to communicate to you the distressing news of the death of our friend Wood.

For some time past the roads round Constantinople have been very unsafe for travelling, without a strong guard; for

which reason the post for Christendom has gone by the Black Sea to Varna, near the mouth of the Danube, and from thence by land to Bukharest, and so on into Germany.

A very few weeks ago, a German courier was attacked and assassinated at about two days' journey from hence, and not many days ago, our consul at Patras, on the Adriatic Sea, had a very narrow escape, for he was pursued by banditti, and got clear only by his horses being better than theirs; this happened just about the same distance from Constantinople, near to a village called Chorley.

Our poor friend Wood was going to England with dispatches from Mr. Arbuthnot, and at the same place was attacked, plundered, and murdered. You will perhaps wish to hear the particulars of his death: he took leave of his friends

at Constantinople on the Wednesday night, and on the following morning set out on his journey; when about the distance of two days' travelling from this city, he met the consul above mentioned, who informed him how he had been chased the day before, and advised him if he was determined to proceed forward, to take a strong guard with him from the next village: a guard is easily to be had at all times, and for this the Aga, or chief man of the district is responsible. Mr. Wood unhappily not availing himself of the good advice of the consul, quitted the village unguarded, proposing to keep by a caravan of sheep which was powerfully attended.

With this caravan he travelled a short time, but finding it proceeded too slowly, he urged the janizary to push on; the janizary remonstrated, and represented the danger they might incur in case of their going forward alone, but poor Wood, zealous in

the service in which he was embarked, lost his temper, and even horsewhipped him. The proud janizary, thinking that his courage was called in question, needed no further argument: he said, "Well, well, if you are not afraid of your life, neither am I of mine;" and spurring up his horse, they advanced at a quick pace.

About half an hour's ride on this side of the next village where they were to halt, they discovered eight men on horseback advancing toward them; the guide knew them at once to be the robbers, and flight was proposed whilst it was in their power, but this proposal was overruled by another to strike out of the high road, and if they should be followed by the men who were approaching quickly, then they might conclude they were suspicious characters. This plan was adopted; they were soon pursued, and soon overtaken, made prisoners, and carried into a deep valley by the robbers, who then began to

examine into their booty: they first divided amongst them what little cash they could find, then proceeded to a partition of the different articles poor Wood was carrying as curiosities and presents to his friends in Great Britain; during all this time he kept supplying them with cold tongue and shrub, which latter he gave them to drink in abundance, in the hope of intoxicating them. The dispatches they cared little about, and even appeared to have no intention of taking any lives: they began to tear his firmans in pieces, upon which he, poor fellow, imprudently interfered, saying one of them was a letter to their Aga, and he would make them repent of it; on hearing this, as if electrified, they mounted their horses, and saying something among themselves, one of them turned and shot Wood through the throat, while he was in the act of drinking a good journey to him: the ball entered below his ear, and came out at the other side.

Thus died one of the best of young men, the admiration of his acquaintance, and the delight of his relations. He and I were intimate for a long time, and I felt his loss like that of a brother. The guide seeing what had happened, rode off, for the robbers never made him dismount. The fate of the janizary was dreadful; he was fired at and wounded; he begged hard for his life, but one of the wretches dismounted, put his knife into his throat, and literally laid his body open.

Wood's servant, a young Greek, had a wonderful escape; after his master's death, several shots were fired at him, but he ran into a pond of water, and lay down in it as though he had been killed.

When the villains were gone, the poor lad came out of the water, and drew near to the dead bodies of his master and the janizary; at the same time he descried the caravan they had so imprudently

quitted in the morning. He ran and communicated the dreadful tidings, begging for assistance; but these prudent people, knowing the watchfulness of the Turks in this part of the country, declined going near the bodies, but advised the youth to accompany them to the village, to which he agreed, and on the morning following returned with some of the Aga's people, and a Greek priest to bury the dead.

On his return, he found the bodies as he had left them, as also the clothes of his unfortunate master, which, as they were in the European fashion, were of no use to the thieves; the poor janizary was stripped to the shirt; Mr. Wood's coat buttons, which they had mistaken for gold, were cut off. The lad was of opinion that the dispatches were left by the robbers when the catastrophe happened; now nothing of them was to be found but one of the seals, which had

been torn off; many other concomitant circumstances led him to believe that they had paid another visit.

The Aga detained the guide and the young man for some days; the latter found means to get a letter conveyed to his Excellency: immediately a Tartar was dispatched from the Porte, who arrived just in time to save the lives of the two survivors of the unfortunate party. In some of the servants of the Aga they had discovered the murderers of their companions, and having said so, they were clapped into prison, and to prevent any discovery, it was thought they would have been dispatched, under the pretence that they were themselves the murderers.

It is asserted, that these worthless Agas are associated with the robbers, and that formerly, men high in office at the Porte shared in the booty. It is to be hoped, however, that the Sultan will soon take

measures to put a stop to these infamous proceedings, and to establish order.

A spaniel, which, a short time before his departure, had been presented to Mr. Wood, lay howling by the dead body of his master, when the party went to bury him: three times they brought this faithful animal to the village, and as often did he return to the grave: on going in search of him once more, for the last time, they found he had made a hole in the ground, to rest himself by the side of his master. The young Greek, on returning with the Tartar to Constantinople, passed near the spot to pay a parting visit to the dog; he found him still there, and threw him a few loaves to keep him alive. This dog afterwards appeared at the door of his master's former habitation in Constantinople, worn almost to a shadow.

I have heard it maintained, that a British courier need never hesitate to

travel in Turkey, that is, from hence into Christendom, our government making such a liberal allowance, that any number of guards necessary can be paid for; and each Aga being responsible for the guards he sends, it is contended, that he will always give an escort equal to the danger.

A gentleman high in office here assured me, that he came to Constantinople at a time when it was reported that the road was much infested with banditti; he brought only a letter from one Aga to another, requesting him to furnish the necessary guards; at some posts he had but one; at one, however, he had fifty, and they once espied a band of men, nearly their own number, whom they knew to be robbers, and prepared for an attack accordingly; but this troop changed its course, when they saw that they had hard blows to expect.

The British government allow, I understand, about 450l. for a courier, whereas the expense seldom or ever exceeds 150l. this sum is therefore, without doubt, allowed in order to provide against such accidents as those which have formed the subject of my present letter.

LETTER XXVI.

Death of the Validà.—By what occasioned.—False Report respecting it.—Funeral Processions.—Tombs.—Singular Notion of the Turks.

Constantinople, 1806.

THE Validà, or Queen-mother of the reigning Sultan, died here lately; she was advanced in years, and had formerly been a slave; she was represented by all who had access to her, as a woman possessed of many good qualities, and dearly beloved by all her friends and domestics; she was all her life suspected of being a Christian, but she shewed no token of this at her death. Selim was much attached to his mother, and her loss seemed to affect him deeply: a short time before

her dissolution she sent for him, and made him promise his protection to all her favorites; the Sultan kept his word; he evinced his filial affection for her, and against all the interest of the seraglio, supported her friends. Her treasurer, in particular, was an object of dislike to all the court, and every one had marked him out for destruction; but they were disappointed. This treasurer was very rich, and had for a length of time been an intriguing fellow, who, from the influence of the Validà, had great interest with the Sultan, as he could refuse his mother nothing.

The death of this Sultana was in a great measure occasioned by her own imprudence, although from a complication of diseases she could not have lived much longer. By her folly in eating what was strictly prohibited, and not keeping a regimen until it was too late, wearied nature was overcome by obstinacy, and

she was seized with an intermitting fever, which terminated her days. Her doctor, with whom I am on the most intimate footing, has often told me, that frequently when he had ordered her to take nothing but some light food for her dinner, long before the hour of dining arrived, she would have devoured a large dish of sallad, mixed up with garlic and other ingredients, which, in the state of her health, could not fail of being destructive to her.

A false report of her death created much confusion; the manner in which it arose is somewhat curious. It is a custom with the Turks, proceeding from their ignorance, when a prince or great personage dies, for their attendants immediately upon this event, to shew their high respect for the deceased, by beating the physicians and surgeons out of the house. The Validá had been in a weak dying state for some days, during which my friend Lo-

renzo, her surgeon, and several of the eminent physicians, never quitted the house, but remained day and night in the seraglio. One of these mornings, very early, a dismal cry was set up, and several of her attendants came from the sick chamber bathed in tears; at this the faculty took the alarm, and, in order to save their shoulders, hastened from the palace as fast as possible.

They passed silently through Constantinople, and set all Pera in an uproar with the news of her death; she did die, however, a few days afterward. The Sultan was inconsolable. The funeral took place in about three hours after her dissolution; being in the country I missed the sight, but I was informed by some persons who were there, that there was nothing curious in the spectacle, excepting that she was covered with beautiful shawls.

The funeral procession of a Sultan is

something singular; the bier is supported by the Muftis, each one lending only the point of his fore finger: in this manner they proceed to the tomb. Some of the tombs of the Sultans are very magnificent; the coffins are covered with fine velvet, richly embroidered.

The Turks have an idea, that the soul keeps hovering near the body until the interment; they therefore perform their melancholy office with the greatest expedition; and in transporting the body from the house where it died, some of the most zealous of the bearers even run, that they may not keep the soul of their friend waiting for its companion.

LETTER XXVII.

Excursions.—Barges.—Palaces and Gardens.—Currents.—Tarapea.—Fish.—Remarkable Plantain.—Aqueduct.—Buyukdery.—Beautiful Valley.—Manufactories.—Return to Constantinople.

Constantinople, 1806.

I SHALL now proceed to give you an account of several little excursions which I have just made with a friend, in and round the metropolis.

The first of these excursions was upon the canal, when we visited Tarapea, Buyukdery, and the mouth of the Black Sea. We embarked at Topliana, or the cannon foundery, which stands nearly opposite the

Seraglio of the Sultan, in one of those elegant barges which ply upon this beautiful water. These barges, though very pretty, are very dangerous, from their construction; they are extremely narrow and round in the bottom, without any keel to keep them steady in the water, their bow or beak rises out of it in a horizontal direction, for several feet, so that the least touch endangers their oversetting; but their velocity, and the graceful manner in which they are rowed by the boatmen of Tophana, in some measure recompense you for the hazard you encounter.

The shores of the canal are lined with most elegant palaces, behind which arise, in grand succession, hanging gardens, topped with tufted trees, which form a most enchanting landscape at every point you turn; and this is beautifully interspersed with clumps of solemn cypress, so abundant at the tombs of Mussulmen.

The canal at Tophana is little more than a mile in breadth; as it goes up towards the Black Sea, for a considerable way, it becomes narrower.

The first palace after leaving Tophana, is one belonging to the Sultan, called Dulmabakski, in which he often resides in the spring. A little farther on is a charming palace of his sister's, who was married to the late Capitan Pacha. This palace displays the reality of one of those depictured in the Arabian Nights Entertainments; it appears to have been the work of Genii; charming and extensive terraces; beautiful and innumerable arched windows, gilded towers, and magnificent portals: the palaces of the royal family are all painted white, which is permitted to no one else; the ornaments are parti-coloured, and gilt in a most sumptuous manner. It is said that the inside of this palace even surpasses the exterior; it is furnished in a most elegant style, with

mirrors, girandoles, and sophas covered with stuffs of the richest texture. The Sultana, who occupies this immense building, is a woman of some education, she can absolutely write Turkish in the Latin character, and can read a little Italian.

The current in the canal becomes here so strong, that it is necessary to take a rope from the shore, which is thrown to you by some industrious Greek or Turk, eager to gain a few paras; a little farther is a turn where the current is likewise very strong; this is named the Devil's current, I suppose in consequence of its rapidity.

The small chiosk of the Sultan, where private audiences are held, both with his own and foreign ministers, is just before you arrive at the Devil's current, at the bottom of a fine bay; these audiences are generally held in the night, for their greater privacy.

The strong current just mentioned, is at the very spot where Darius made his bridge of boats, and at the narrowest point of the whole canal; indeed, the human voice may easily be heard across. Some towers are built on the European, as well as the Asiatic side, by way of fortifying this pass; they are called Darius's towers, but of whatever use they may have been in former times, they serve no other purpose now than as lodgings to a band of Bostangi, or guards on the canal.

Tarapea is the village to which the Greek princes resort in the summer time; it is also the residence of the British ambassador, and is now become a place of great gaiety; many wealthy Armenians and Jews have houses in its vicinity. The situation of Tarapea is charming, as are the walks about it; it is built around a deep bay. Here you begin to have a peep of the Black Sea.

We landed at Tarapea, and walked to Buyukdery, sending on a servant to prepare another boat for us, as we intended going into the mouth of the Black Sea. The road which we took lay by the water's edge, and in many places had suffered from a northerly wind, to which it is exposed. Between Tarapea and Buyukdery, are many fishing huts, where vast quantities of the finest fish are taken. Their mode of fishing here is curious: the nets are very broad, and are laid horizontally in the water; stakes are driven into the bottom, at a considerable distance from the shore, to which the net is fastened, the one end sunk, so inclining until it forms a kind of purse. The fish coming down the current, get gradually up the net, till they arrive at the purse, from which they cannot get out again. The net of the fisherman is placed high above the water, and when he sees a sufficient quantity in the net, he calls to his companions, when they draw up all

corners, and with a boat, take possession of their prey.

The whole of the canal abounds with a great variety of the finest fish; indeed there is scarcely any of a coarse kind. Turbot, sturgeon, sword-fish, and red and white mullet, are in plenty, besides many others, not known in Britain. In the spring they take a sort of mackarel, of the size of an herring, which they dry in the sun, and this becomes quite an article of trade; it is eaten by the Greeks and Roman Catholics, on their meagre days. Last year this fishery was great beyond any thing I ever heard of before. The canal was at one time so full of them, that the boats could scarcely make their way through them, and the people at Tarapea and Buyukdery, actually lifted them out before their doors in buckets.

Before we entered Buyukdery, we paid a visit to the fine plantain which forms a

clump, so much celebrated by those who have travelled in this neighbourhood. This clump is formed from one tree, or more properly from one root, which has branched out into from fifteen to twenty large trees, as if planted in a circular form; the inside of the circle is at least twenty feet in circumference; the trees are all in high preservation, and have long been a subject of admiration and dispute. Immediately behind this curiosity, is a deep valley, at the head of which is a noble aqueduct, built by Justinian, which conveys water to Constantinople. This aqueduct forms a fine termination to a beautiful landscape, as the mountains around the valley are clothed with the richest foliage.

We now entered the charming village of Buyukdery, the country residence of many of the European ambassadors and merchants. This village is preferred to most of the other retreats in the neighbourhood of the me-

tropolis; the goodness of the air, and the convenience of carriage to town, either by land or water, are none of its most inconsiderable advantages; there is a good carriage road to the city. In the middle of the day this village, from being open to the south-east, is much exposed to the heat, but the evenings and mornings compensate for that; the evenings are particularly delightful; the quay then becomes the promenade of all classes; the young Franks or Greeks serenading their mistresses from their barges, heighten the beauty and gaiety of the scene. The instruments played on by these lovers, are the lyre, the lute, the guitar, the violin, and the hautbois; at intervals the voice is emphatically introduced, to which the beat of the oar forms a fine cadence. The canal in the evening becomes like a mirror.

Arrived at the inn, we found a simple, but wholesome breakfast, prepared for us, of which we partook with good appetites;

then again embarking in a fresh boat, we proceeded as we intended, to the mouth of the sea before us, ordering our servant to meet us with the boat which brought us from Constantinople, at the charming valley opposite, called Kuzubaji, where we meant to dine, that we might have the satisfaction of saying, that on the same day we breakfasted in Europe, and dined in Asia.

Before leaving Buyukdery, we visited the garden of the Russian palace: this garden and palace were formerly the property of a British merchant; the garden is upon the side of a mountain, which lies behind the village, and is, with great taste, fancifully laid out in walks and plots, as you ascend, every one of them presenting to the eye something novel and engaging; it is finely adapted for those rural fêtes which have been here the source of much enjoyment.

The day was not altogether favourable for going near the mouth of the Black Sea, there was a high swell, as the wind had been strong the day preceding. We proceeded, however, a few miles, passed the castles built by Baron de Tott, and saw at a distance the Tower of Ovid; then crossing the canal to Varia, the landscapes extended down the Asiatic side, to the place where we had ordered our equipage to be in waiting. The current being now in our favour, we made rapid progress, and in a short time arrived at the delightful spot.

The valley extends for several miles into the country; it is remarkably luxuriant, being finely watered, and sheltered from the scorching rays of the sun, by the lofty plantain, oak, and chesnut. To this spot the Grand Signior often makes parties, where, on the plain before him, are exhibited dancing, rope-dancing, wrestling, singing, and short comedies, by a party of Jews.

On a former occasion, I witnessed one of these entertainments, given by the present Vizier, shortly after his instalment, at which the Sultan was said to be incog; I returned from it highly amused. One piece performed at that time was founded on a fact, which occurred a few evenings before in Constantinople: the funeral of a Jew passing one of the guard-houses in the city, a guard, either from curiosity, or with a view of extorting some money from the terrified Jews, stopped the procession, when lo! the supposed dead Jew started from the bier, as if just awakened from a profound sleep, and running off, left his astonished friends in the hands of the Turks, who, by order of their chief, handled them in a very rough manner, for thus attempting to deprive the Sultan of a subject. This piece was represented with great spirit, and the Turkish guard, in performing their part, seemed to think that they were engaged in the actual scene, instead of a representation of it.

After amusing ourselves with a survey of this mountain-surrounded spot, we proceeded to the manufactories of the Sultan, lately erected under the superintendance of an English renegado, upon quite an English plan. One is for the manufacture of paper, another for that of broad cloth. The buildings are very handsome, and the machinery apparently good. In this work the Sultan has great merit, as well as the renegado. Our servant had judiciously chosen a situation from whence we had a full view of Buyukdery, Tarapea, and several other villages, and villas both Greek and Turkish. Here, under a shady oak, our carpet was spread, and we regaled in a sumptuous manner on a Turkish dinner, for we had ordered a pillau, and had some fish fried in the fisherman's style. The Turks, high and low, are very cleanly in their cookery. I have often looked with admiration on the shining dishes in a Turkish kitchen. The pillau is their ge-

neral food, and may not improperly be called their national dish.

To give our people time to dine, we lighted our pipes, and found a flask of Trojan wine excellent. Wrapt in admiration of the scenes that surrounded us, not till coffee was handed us, did we reflect on the hour of the day. We found now that the shadows were lengthened, and prepared to depart.

Having come up by the west, we now continued our course by the east side of the canal, by this we found the scene wonderfully varied. Although the east side is not of itself near so elegant, we had now a fuller view of the palaces and gardens, which in the morning we had been too near, to see in all their beauty. We made rapid progress, and arrived in sight of Scutari and the Seraglio Point, just as the sun had abandoned to shade the lower objects; the lofty and gilded minarets, and

the stately domes, shone bright, interspersed with the gloomy cypress. With the last glimpse of the setting sun we stepped on shore at Dulmabakshu, which is immediately under a large burying ground, that forms the extent of the promenade of the Christians, where, on a small plat of grass, they repose, smoke their pipes, and drink coffee, having before them the view of Scutari town, the hill of Scutari, and the habitations of the Sultan's new troops, which are built on a point of that name.

We here joined many of our acquaintance, and with them enjoyed the delightful prospect, and recounted to them the exploits of the day.

LETTER XXVIII.

Arsenal. — Ships. — Public Buildings. — Girrett. — Kakhana. — Belgrade. — Romesa. — Snakes. — Immense Barracks. — Pera.

Constantinople, 1806.

As a continuation of our excursions, we have been visiting Kakhana, or the sweet water. We embarked after going to the arsenal, but I must say something to you respecting it: there is an excellent dock here, built by a Swede, a clever fellow; there is at present lying in it a fine three decker, called the Selim, which is of very beautiful construction, and was the flag ship of the late Capitan Pacha. The water here neither ebbs nor flows, so that

when the ships are let into the dock the gates are shut, and it is pumped out by means of bucket pumps worked by mules. About two years ago it was proposed to have a steam engine, and a person was sent to England on purpose for one, but on the death of the Capitan Pacha, which took place at that time, the project was abandoned.

The water in all the golden horn is so deep, that ships of any draught may come close to the shore; we saw several, both ships of the line and frigates at the wharf, some careening, others coppering and getting their guns and masts on board, The Turkish fleet looks very respectable, consisting of upwards of forty ships of the line and frigates, besides many smaller vessels of war. Before the arsenal lay five new corvettes ready for sea, of a very pretty fabric, and neatly rigged.

We proceeded up the water; a little

way above the arsenal there is a school for seamen, where they are instructed in naval tactics, and lodged when their ships are not employed. Farther on is a brass foundery, where cannon is made, and here are barracks for their artillery men: they have also a fortification formed in miniature on the model of the fortifications of Sweden. There is an extensive royal palace near the foundery, which at present is inhabited by a great many jew families; it is but a short time ago, that the quarter of the town occupied by the jews, which is close by, was destroyed by fire, and numbers of them lost their all. The humane Selim, when he learnt their situation, ordered his palace to be thrown open to receive them, and sent money for their support.

The public works at Constantinople are all on the north side of the water, most probably on account of the offensiveness of the smoke, or perhaps, because it

was judged less subject to fire, so destructive in this part of the world.

Near to the palace and foundery just mentioned, is a mosque, said to be the first built at Constantinople; opposite to it is the part of the capital called the Fanal, where the Greek princes have their winter residence; their houses have a paltry appearance, and are painted a deep red or chocolate colour, which makes them look heavy.

After passing the public works, many palaces line both sides of the canal; those on the south side are elegant and extensive, particularly that of the late Valida.

The water now becomes very narrow, and terminates in a charming valley, through which runs the small river which still continues for a considerable distance, navigable for boats. We stopped at a

small chiosk of the Sultan's guard, where it is customary to drink coffee; about a mile farther on is a cheerful village, at which the Sultan has a small palace in a truly romantic situation: in front is a fine park, bounded by a well wooded mountain; behind it a cascade, formed by damming up the water, which is fancifully arranged into jets d'eaux.

The park is flanked with many pieces of artillery and mortars, for the amusement of the Sultan; it was here that De Tott exercised his men, and fired a royal salute of twenty-one guns from a single piece, to shew his master how quickly he could fire: this park is often the scene of equestrian exercises. The girrett, or throwing the lance, is a favorite amusement with the Turks; it is performed by two horsemen at full speed: the girrett is a light stick about six feet long; the parties set off, the one in chace of the other; when at a proper distance, he who

is in pursuit throws his girrett, aiming at the head and shoulders of his companion; he then with a dexterity peculiar to the Turks, wheels his horse about and gallops off, whilst he who was thrown at, after receiving the blow or seeing the girrett pass, wheels round in like manner, pursues, and aims in his turn. After this, two others start, and so on, till the conclusion of the entertainment. At a party of this kind the late vizier lost his eye, playing with one of his own slaves. It is astonishing with what adroitness, and to what a distance a Turk will throw his girrett.

We had ordered our horses to meet us at this place, which is called Kakhana, and proceeded up the valley to Belgrade. The pasture is fine all along the side of the river now become a rivulet; the principal Turks send their horses here to graze before the heat of the season comes on. We passed among hundreds of

beautiful Arabian coursers; our road now lay over the mountains, or at least, skirting them. For several miles we were enbosomed in a thick forest, in which many robberies have been committed of late, but against an attack of this kind we were well prepared; we met many a suspicious, ill-looking fellow armed for the game which abound here, who are in general the persons that commit depredations on those who are defenceless, but we reached the house of our friend Mr. S—— without accident.

Belgrade is about two hours ride from town; it is situated in the midst of an almost impervious forest. The origin of this village probably was from hunting boxes being built here by the lovers of sporting, which the forest amply affords. The wild boar abounds here, and is larger and finer in flavour than in most parts where it is to be found. The shooters of wild boar, hidden in the foliage of some

lofty tree, lie in wait for him in the dead of night, when he knows the boar comes in quest of food; the noise which he makes gives the sportsman warning of his approach, and he then takes a deliberate aim. The shooting of wild boar in the open field is a dangerous sport, for if the animal happens to be only wounded, he immediately turns, runs to the spot from whence the smoke proceeds, and tears in pieces whatever comes in his way: a precaution is, however, made use of with effect by those who follow this amusement; as soon as they have fired they go a few paces to the right or left, and as the boar runs straight forward, thus escape him. The forest of Belgrade abounds with woodcock and pheasant.

Before dinner we walked to the garden of the late Mr. Tooke, which although small, is laid out with some taste: he was at the expense of having fruit trees

from home; in their season he had gooseberries and currants of all kinds.

In the afternoon we enjoyed a charming walk under the shade of some lofty trees, whither the Greeks and Armenians resort, to form little dinner parties, and make kieff, the Turkish expression for making merry. We found here several of these happy parties, and were invited to partake with them, and join in their national dance, the romesa, which they perform with great spirit: it consists in the company holding one another's hands, and dancing in a sort of curved line, sometimes in a circle, he who leads the rest holding a handkerchief, generally richly embroidered, which after flourishing about with for some time, and making a variety of strange gestures, he throws at the feet of some favored fair, who takes it up and then imitates him. The dance is thus continued for a length of time; their

music is generally the lute or lyre, which they always accompany with the voice. The throwing of the handkerchief probably originated in the belief that the Sultan throws one to the lady he chuses to select, but I have been assured, even by those who had access to the haram, that this is a great error.

The walks around Belgrade are delightful, and suited to every hour of the day, according to the situation of the sun; one by the side of a small lake, which forms a reservoir to supply Constantinople with water, is not the most uninteresting. It is generally said that Belgrade is less healthy than the other villages during the heat of the summer, on account of the vicinity of this lake, to the evening and night vapours of which it is exposed. Fevers in the months of July and August are here very prevalent.

The milk and butter at Belgrade are remarkably good, and attract many visitors to it in the spring and autumn. Rich flocks browze in the neighbourhood, and the vine here yields a delicious wine, named by the Armenians, oriental topaz, from its beautiful colour.

The shades of evening brought new pleasure; all was stillness around, save that thousands of nightingales were warbling their harmonious strains.

Snakes and serpents are not uncommon in the forest. It is reported, that a few years ago, a snake was killed here by a sportsman; it was evidently not a native of this part of the world; it was eighteen pikes of twenty-seven inches long: when the sportsman saw it, it had the head of a human being in its mouth: it was exposed in the village as a curiosity; I heard the circumstance related by one who had seen it there. Snakes of this

kind are sometimes found in Persia and India, and have been known to kill an ox, or even a lion. They conceal themselves in a tree, and by some means entice the animal underneath it, when they dart down, and striking it on the back of the neck, kill it at a blow; they then smash all the bones, and suck the whole carcase into their stomach; with this they lie in a sick state till it is dissolved, and during this period become an easy prey to those who before had fled from them to wait this opportunity. It is probable that the snake killed at Belgrade was in this condition with the body of the man in it which it had destroyed, when the sportsman shot it.

In the evening we returned to Constantinople by the extensive aqueduct of Justinian, which is of very fine architecture; it is built over a valley, and is formed of simple arches, placed the one above the other; it is in such good pre-

servation that the fabric appears to be quite modern. We took the road which leads into that from Buyukdery to town; it presents little that is interesting for several miles, and the country is quite barren: the first building that appears is an hospital, now converted into barracks, in which the first of the new troops were collected and drilled by a German renegado; these barracks are in a fine airy situation, and have a peep of the arsenal: a handsome kiosk is also to be seen at no great distance from the road, built on the top of a high hill by the late Capitan Pacha, and presented by him to his brother-in-law, the Sultan: from the great height of this kiosk, it is to be seen at a considerable distance, of course the view from it must be grand and commanding.

We now began to view from afar, the lofty, minarets, and in a short time arrived at the Frank promenade, the large

burying ground. The Sultan is at present building here, on a vast plan, barracks for the German soldiery; they are on an elegant plan, and when finished will form an immense square: three sides will be occupied by the foot soldiers, and will be sufficiently capacious to contain from eight to ten thousand men: the fourth side is formed into another square of a less size, containing lodging and stabling for a small army of cavalry; this has a tolerably handsome appearance; it is all of solid freestone: the largest is formed of stone in the first story, and afterwards of wood and stone mixed together. The Turks have a curious mode of building; the roofs of this immense pile were all finished before a stone of the wall was laid, and were supported by wooden pillars: it is probable, however, that this may be the Armenian method, as all their builders and architects are of that people.

The entrance to Pera is shabby and inconvenient; the street is scarcely broad enough for a single carriage to pass, and when two meet, one of them is obliged to go back for a considerable way to find a wide spot.

The houses in Pera, although it is the habitation of the Franks, are, with the exception of a very few, built of wood and unburnt brick, and huddled together without the least design or order.

LETTER XXIX.

Excursion.—Birds.—Ancient Walls of Constantinople.—Cultivation of the Country.—Grave of a Martyr.—Miracles performed there.—St. Stephano.—Small Bridges.

Constantinople, 1806.

We had been invited by my venerable friend Dr. Lorenzo, surgeon to the Sultan, to pay a visit to his country seat, called St. Stephano, and Saturday last being a day on which he found leisure to absent himself, which he does only once or twice a year, we took an early breakfast with him, and to avoid the streets of Pera and Galata, descended from his house to Tophana, where we embarked. We

rowed up the golden horn, at present filled with several ships ready to enter the Black Sea. As we passed close by their vessels, we found the Greeks, with all the liveliness so prominent in their character, singing their love-songs, and dancing to the lyre, their favorite and national instrument.

The aquatic birds are abundant on this arm of water, never being molested either by Turk or Christian. The sea-gull here is larger and of a more beautiful plumage than I recollect any where to have seen it. I was amused with looking at the pigeons, which fed with impunity upon several large barges loaded with corn; the Turks will not allow them to be destroyed, saying, "There is enough both for them and us;" the barges were entirely covered with them.

As horses had been ordered for us by the worthy doctor near the south west

part of Constantinople, we landed there. For about half an hour we rode through a street lined with Greek and Turkish shops, filled with the finest fruit and vegetables; after which, we got into a track that led us close under the walls of Constantinople, built by Belisarius, in an angle of which are shewn the ruins of his palace: these walls have been once very good, now they are in a state of decay, although a little expenditure of time and money might still put them in useful repair; the moat, which is broad, is yet in many places in good condition. The gate to Adrianople is finely situated; the road to that city is advantageously placed before it, and several others branch out; they are all causeways, and extend as far as the eye can reach over a level country. For a considerable time our road lay close by the walls, which in many places are covered with ivy and fig trees; the ditch is in general laid into kitchen gardens,

in which they have vegetables earlier than in other parts of the country round, probably from the reflection of the white marble walls.

The Baluck, or first gate where we struck off in another direction, is very elegant; its architecture appears much more modern than that of the others; it is immediately above what is called the seven towers, now occupied as a more severe prison by the Turks.

We had here a fine view of the sea of Marmora upon our left, and all around us plains of vast extent in a higher state of cultivation than I have seen any where else in Turkey: the north side of Constantinople is totally abandoned to nature, but from the depth of the soil and the fineness of the climate, it might with the smallest trouble be made equal to the south; on that side most of the grandees have what is called their chifflick

or farm, where they go for their amusement, and even the Sultan himself has several here: this accounts for its being in better order than the north, which is more contiguous to the habitation of the Franks.

We now drew near a miserable village named Balucklee; here is a small Greek chapel, and near it is a Christian burying ground, in which repose the remains of many a martyr, at the grave of one of whom, who had his head taken off for the faith, many astonishing miracles have been, and daily are performed, some of the most wonderful of which I will endeavour to entertain you with, having no apprehension that you will think me superstitious. A Turk boy, who was dumb from his birth, was brought here by his mother and some Christians, who, it appears, had made a convert of her; after some orations and rites, the youth acquired the gift of speech, and went

home rejoicing. The mussulman father, however, after enquiring into the means by which his son had found his speech, broke out into a rage, and for his ingratitude the power of utterance was again taken from the boy!!

The doctor, although in many respects superior to the absurdities of superstition, told us that he recollected many curious things that had happened at this grave, and among others related the following: A Greek or Armenian woman, I forget which, had been bed-ridden for several years, and attended by all the medical men in the metropolis; Lorenzo himself had visited her for a length of time, but all to no effect; she was, however, as a last resource, prevailed on by some zealots to allow herself to be carried to pay a visit to the grave of this martyr, when, lo! after many prayers and charities, she was restored to the use of her limbs, and walked home. Lorenzo affirmed that he saw her

some days afterwards, going about in perfect health; she, that but a few days before he had been treating as an incurable cripple!!

A little below Balucklee, on the side next the sea, stands a powder factory and magazine belonging to the Turks; it is finely situated for a building of that nature. Some months ago, about one hundred and fifty rebels advanced as far as this manufactory, and the pusillanimous government was so terrified, that it issued orders to give them what powder they wanted, and even sent them money to induce them to depart. It is proposed now to build a small fort near the magazine, to prevent visits of this kind in future.

Our road now lay along the margin of the sea; at a little distance some ruins are visible, but not sufficient to mark what they have been; they are, however, apparently ancient, from the thickness of the walls.

We shortly arrived at St. Stephano, which is a neat little village close to the sea. It is celebrated for its situation, being at the same time in a fine sporting neighbourhood, enjoying a charming air, and having fish of the finest kinds within a stone's throw of the shore; it is also famous for its mushrooms, which are of an excellent quality.

It is probable that Lorenzo bestowed this name upon the village, he being a native of Florence; he has built a palace here, and his hospitality has caused it to become the home of sportsmen of the first rank. Ambassadors fond of that invigorating amusement, the chace, have not unfrequently been his guests.

The plains of St. Stephano have long been renowned for the quality and abundance of the quails, which come here on their passage from the Black Sea, or rather from Russia. A good marksman has

been known to bring down in one day an hundred and fifty of them: they make excellent pillau, and are delicious roasted. The woodcock, partridge, and hare, also abound here.

The old gentleman seemed young again when he got his foot on the grass; he is at present about seventy-five, and for more than forty years has been the first surgeon of the seraglio: after dinner and a short nap, we walked out; he took his gun, and actually killed half a dozen quails before our return. In the evening he proposed a fishing party, and while we drank tea the nets were laid in the water; the mode of fishing here resembles that at Smyrna, only as the water is very deep, instead of the hollow wood for beating it, they have a thin circular piece of white marble tied to a cord, which they throw in and draw along the inside of the nets, which drives the fish into them. We drew

our nets several times, and with a rich supply of fish, returned to supper and to enjoy the conversation of our sage host, who for upwards of forty years has been admitted into the most private recesses of the haram, as well as into the confidence of the first men of the realm; his anecdotes were curious and entertaining, but you will excuse my relating any of them, as by this means they might be made an instrument to work his ruin.

On the morning of the next day, while it was still cool, we rode to several villages in the neighbourhood, but excepting the delightful prospect from them, they afforded nothing worthy our attention. In one of them named Floreo, we saw a vase with some figures in relief upon it; it is said to have been a lustral font, but to me it appeared like an architrave, which had been hollowed out for the purpose it is now applied to, namely, beating out

corn. Our ride extended as far as Ponti Piccoli, the small bridges, which are built over a river and morass of nearly half a mile in breadth; the road to Christendom lies by these bridges, and a very strong hold might be made here, as it is the only pass to Constantinople by land. We found here two very strong Turkish guards, one to examine travellers, the other to prevent smuggling. The village at the bridges is miserable; the inhabitants live chiefly by fishing and shooting ducks, which abound in the morass; the country around is rich and well cultivated.

At the hour of dinner we found assembled our whole party, who during the morning had separated to pursue those amusements which best suited their taste.

LETTER XXX.

Selim III.—Improvements in Constantinople.—Abolition of Protections.—Accumulation of evils from granting them.—Chiosks.—Return to Constantinople.

Constantinople, 1806.

After dinner at St. Stephano, having fallen upon a darling theme, our conversation became very interesting; the Sultan Selim, formed the subject. The worthy doctor had nursed him on his knee, and saved his life in his maturer years: more than once he had restored him from the effects of poison, and had so often experienced his gratitude, that

it was no wonder he should be eloquent in his praise.

In the character of Selim we perceive none of that haughtiness and thirst for blood which for ages has disgraced the Turkish name; he is affable and indulgent; the Turkish crescent, which has for some time been on the wane, seems now under his wise government to be increasing, and should he be succeeded by a prince of the same disposition, it is to be hoped that the government of this country will again rise into splendor, contrary to the expectations of all Europe. Selim has, like his ancestor, seen the evil caused by the janizaries, and has followed the plan of Mustapha in raising the new troops according to the method adopted by the Christians; these troops now exceed sixty thousand, are instructed in the European tactics, and less encumbered with dress and arms than the

janizaries: recruiting goes on rapidly, and it is generally expected that in a short time Selim will be able to throw off that yoke which so long burdened his predecessors: the new troops have barracks built for them, and are kept entirely distinct from the inhabitants; they are also well paid, and every necessary encouragement is given in order to attach them to their sovereign.

The state of the arsenal and the fleet, emerging from irregularity and confusion into respectability and usefulness, the press being established in direct defiance of Mahometan superstition, the erection of factories for the fabric of many articles of utility, and the encouragement given to several branches of trade in the suburbs, are no small steps toward improvement. But the principal means by which the Sultan at once enriches and strengthens his empire, is his disallowing the ambassadors of other nations at his

court to grant foreign protections to his subjects.

In 1805, it was computed that Russia alone gave protection to 80,000 Turkish subjects: from time immemorial it has been the custom of foreign ambassadors at the Porte to sell their protections to the subjects of it, by which they were released from the avanies, or extortions of the government, to which every individual was liable; they were judged by the laws of that country whose ambassador protected them, and paid custom for their goods as if they had been subjects of the government by which he was employed. The rajahs were likewise allowed the privilege of wearing yellow slippers, which they prized more than any other benefit which could accrue to them from their protection.

The abuse of protections had been car-

ried to such an extreme, that the only subjects of the Porte were now the low and vile, who had not wherewithal to purchase one. The head money paid by rajahs was dwindling into nothing, and revenue in many respects became a perfect trifle, yet the evil did not stop here; scarcely a Greek ship sailed that did not bear the colours of some Frank nation, and hardly a seaman remained in the state that was not Russian. The danger became formidable with the evil, for in the event of a rupture with Russia, a thing not at all improbable, the Turks stood deserted without men, without resources. Selim III. abolished this traffic of protections, and declared that he himself would be the guardian of this subjects, and would allow none else this privilege: he further resolved that no one should enjoy the protection of ambassadors, but those who were actually employed as dragomen or the like, at

the different Scales in the Levant, and decreed that they should reside at the port or place which their firman bore.

The firmness with which Selim adhered to this determination astonished all the Europeans; they declared that they would rather go to war with all the world than abandon their established custom.

The ambassadors and dragomen used all their rhetoric in vain; they were menaced and threatened, and finally a firman was issued establishing the Sultan's decree, and a proclamation declaring in what manner his subjects should be protected.

By this act the Porte sensibly wounded the feelings both of Ambassadors and dragomen, for excepting the British, people from every nation disposed of protections, and the emoluments arising therefrom, particularly to the dragomen,

were immense, not only from the sale of them, but because they likewise protected the purchasers in their nefarious practices, for which great fees were necessarily paid.

The British nation under the ambassadorship of Mr. Liston, discontinued the custom of granting protections, and since then, with the exception of a few instances, it has never again been adopted.

The Porte has also shewn great firmness in maintaining a neutrality in the present contest, although urged to war by both parties. The Ottoman Porte likewise was one of the last governments which acknowledged the Corsican usurper for an emperor.

In conversations on subjects such as the above, we passed the afternoon; in the evening the party adjourned to a delightful garden, made by the doctor at a

great expense, that he might here enjoy his kiosk when the heat of the day was over: I believe I have not mentioned to you what a kiosk is: it is a kind of summer-house, placed generally in an elevated situation commanding some fine prospect; the windows are so arranged, as to exclude the rays of the sun, and admit the cooling breeze; there are sofas around the room to recline on. Below was a flower garden which sent up a delicious perfume, and in the middle of it was a cistern full of gold and silver fish. The Turks spend a great deal of time in their kiosks, and some of them are fitted up in a very magnificent manner.

On Monday morning before sun-rise we embarked in the doctor's barge, and returned home by water.

The wind had been northerly for some time, and the ships for the Black Sea

were lying in great numbers all the way from St. Stephano to Constantinople, waiting a favorable breeze to carry them round the Seraglio Point, or through the Bosphorus. We went on board a Venetian vessel to breakfast, and in honor of our friend the Doctor, were saluted by every gun she had: the Venetians are very fond of paying this kind of compliment to people they respect.

After a small collation in a clean cabin we again entered our barge, and rowed up under the lofty walls of the seraglio, which afforded little that was interesting.

The north wind generally prevails during the spring and summer months, which frequently makes the voyage to the Black Sea long and tedious; I have known ships to lie from June to October before they could get through the Bosphorus, though it appears to me that it would be no difficult matter to lay

warping chains through the currents: early in the spring and autumn the south wind takes, but even then it is often so slight, that a vessel can scarcely stem the current.

LETTER XXXI.

Scutari.—Printing Office.—Turkish General. — Barracks. — Princes Islands.— Brusa.

Constantinople, 1806.

We parted from the doctor at the Seraglio Point, and crossing the canal, landed at Scutari, under the tower of Leander; this tower is built upon a rock near the east side of the canal, immediately opposite to Tophana, and forms a small guard-house, and something like a little fortification: why it is called Leander's Tower I cannot tell, as it is well known that the place where Leander and Hero carried on their amours is farther to the Southward.

We landed at that part of Scutari where the Grand Signor has built a mole for the delivery of small vessels, and for the landing of boats; this little mole is very neat, and the raising it must have been a considerable expense, as the stones have been brought from a great distance.

Immediately from this mole arises the hill on which stands Scutari, a fine wide street regularly built, and well paved; the houses are principally laid out for manufactories; the under or ground floor for weaving shops, and the story above for the dwellings of the weavers; they manufacture a sort of silk stuff used by the orientals for vests and under garments; it is wrought in a very superior style and brocaded with gold and silver flowers. In Constantinople and its environs there are at present nearly ten thousand looms at work upon this and other inferior articles: this must yield

no small profit to the state, as the materials of which they are made are chiefly the produce of the country.

Farther up in this new town is the printing-office, established, as I have before mentioned, by the reigning Sultan, in direct contradiction to the ruling superstition of his people; it is upon a pretty extensive plan for the beginning of a building of the kind; there are at present about ten presses going. Several persons are employed in translating useful books, and many are already printed in a very beautiful manner upon the paper made at the Sultan's manufactory upon the canal, and before leaving the office are bound either richly or plainly, according to the taste of the purchaser. Books of geography are printed, and also maps of all the different parts of the world, pretty accurately, in the Turkish characters. We saw besides, Captain Cook's voyages, and the Elements of Euclid, in quarto: not

being versed in the Turkish language, we could not judge if they were well translated, but the translator being a man of great abilities, there is little doubt but that he has done justice to his countryman Cook. It is generally supposed that justice has been done to Euclid.

Besides the manufactories already mentioned, we found that many others equally useful, are carried on at Scutari; they print and dye an immense quantity of India, British, and German muslins, here and all over the environs of the capital: they make charming colours, which are more durable than those in almost any other country.

We called on the surgeon of the new troops, with whom I was a little acquainted; he was so good as to introduce us to the general who commanded them. We found this man something superior to the greater part of the Turks; he was

tolerably well informed, and spoke a little Greek and Italian; he is very fond of the English, and liked much to talk about England; on politics he spoke with seeming judgment. The armoury of the general is very grand; he appears fond of displaying his arms, and brought out some English pistols of fine workmanship, and also a pair made at a manufactory in Turkey, which were not amiss: he shewed us several Damascus swords, but we were most gratified with viewing the sword of the famous Khouli Khan, which had been presented to him by the late mother of this master; it is either the manufacture of Damascus, or some part in Persia; it is rather longer and less curved than those so much esteemed in Turkey, and is about three times their weight.

After passing half an hour with the general, and visiting his stud of horses, in which we saw many beautiful Arabian coursers, we went to the barracks, which

stand on a promontory immediately opposite the seraglio point, in a most healthy situation; before entering them, we took coffee at an elegant coffee-house built for the use of the troops, and were here introduced to a brother of the general, from whom we had just parted; he commands a body of cavalry at present stationed in Scutari: both he and the general are fine-looking men.

The barracks form three sides of a square, having in front a spacious field for exercising the troops, at the bottom of which the Sultan has a kiosk, where he sits and sees their evolutions.

These barracks are very extensive, and capable of containing many thousands; we walked through one wing, which was very clean and well aired; they are built of brick and stone, and covered in with tiles, which are generally used in Turkey. Behind them, Selim, who omits nothing

which may tend to attach his new troops to him, has erected an elegant mosque for their use; in short, nothing seems wanting to render them healthy and comfortable. There is a fine view from the hill behind Scutari, but as a cloud then hung upon it, we contented ourselves with what we saw from the kiosk of the Sultan. From the point of Scutari, Constantinople has a charming effect, rising like an amphitheatre, crowned with lofty mountains and majestic domes, where St. Sophia stands queen among the churches.

The Prince's Islands are at no great distance from Scutari, and appear to be enchanting spots; the air at them is fine, and esteemed beneficial in pulmonary complaints, although considered too thin by some of the medical men. Many of the Greek princes have palaces at the islands, but very few Franks visit them, excepting in the way of excursions: those attached to the French nation have sum-

mer residences here, as they followed their ambassador, who, until lately, always took up his abode in them in that season; of late, however, he has passed the summer months at Tarapea.

Mount Olympus, in Natolia, is seen clearly from Scutari, its summit rising majestically above the clouds; at the foot of it is the city of Brusa, famous now only for the great quantities of silk stuffs made at it; you recollect it was formerly the capital of the Turks: near Brusa are several hot springs, much resorted to on account of their medicinal qualities; they likewise make use of a curious kind of bath near the foot of the mountain; a pit is dug in the sand, which is hot and highly impregnated with nitre; the patient is put into the pit, and covered with sand up to the chin; here he continues for some time, after which he is taken out, and carried to a warm water bath heated by nature. This kind of burying alive is

reckoned good for rheumatism, scrophula, and nervous complaints.

We returned from Scutari by the road we came, and were accompanied in our descent by the surgeon, who invited us to stop at a small coffee-house near the water side, where he ordered, from a man who came out to serve us, coffee and pipes; we smoked our pipes and drank our coffee, after which I paid the usual charge for the coffee, six paras for three cups, about twopence halfpenny of English money; the surgeon then told me, that the man who waited on us was the first major of the new troops.

We arrived at home without meeting any thing else worth mentioning.

LETTER XXXII.

Turkish Baths.—Amusements of the Turks.—Jealousy, from whence arising.—Punishment of Intrigues.—Carosman Oglu.

Constantinople, 1806.

THIS evening we resolved to try the Turkish bath, an account of which may perhaps amuse you; we arrived at it at a time when it was free of company, of course we had more leisure to examine it.

The baths in Turkey are mostly all on the same plan, although some may be finer than others: every person of any note has one in his own house, but the

public baths are in general more esteemed than the private ones, on account of their being kept warm throughout the year, whereas the others are heated only when occasion requires.

On entering the bath, we were conducted into a large hall, on the sides of which benches are raised about two feet from the floor, long enough for a matrass; here we undressed, and were each served with a sash to tie round us when we took off our clothes; the heat of this first room was moderate. We were then conducted into another a degree warmer, and lastly to an inner one, which was heated considerably. These rooms are warmed by stoves, and vaulted in the roof the better to retain the heat; the respiration room, or inner one, has a slab of marble raised up in the middle of it, large enough for several people to lie on; immediately under it is the stove, fires from which go round the apartment; it is likewise fur-

nished with basons, each of which is supplied with a cock of warm and cold water.

On the marble table it is necessary to lie down and perspire for at least half an hour; a servant then comes and traces the muscles of the limbs, and sets all the joints in order; after this operation (not the most pleasant one in the world, as he makes all the joints crack), he with a hair cloth, like what we use for cleaning horses, rubbed us down, drawing from the skin a sort of calcareous matter in incredible quantities; the substance came off in rolls as thick as macaroni: the body being completely cleansed of this impurity, we proceeded to the basons, where we were washed with soap and warm water from head to foot with a fine sponge.

After this washing, a linen sheet was thrown over us, and we retired to the

hall, where matrasses were prepared with clean linen, and we lay down on these until the body returned to its usual temperature.

The bath is a very great luxury; the body feels relieved by it, and the joints and sinews more elastic; the orientals, both male and female, indulge much in it; the ladies make it a place of great recreation, they form parties to go and pass whole days in the luxury of washing themselves and plaiting their hair, which is beautiful and very luxuriant; they are very careful of it, and form it into a hundred tresses; auburn is the prevailing colour.

The Turkish bath used in moderation is certainly beneficial; but the females indulge in it to such an excess, that their solids are relaxed, and their flesh appears as if it were falling from their bones; the men, who make use of the bath only mo-

derately, enjoy good health, and their flesh is firm.

The amusements of the Turks are but few and trifling; they play no game for money, although they are fond of chess and backgammon, and a game played with shells: they but seldom ride or walk for amusement. The ladies pass their time in the haram, in music, dancing, and embroidery; when they are allowed to take the air, it is generally in an araba, a kind of open car, covered only on the top with a carpet as a shelter from the sun and the rain; it is drawn by a pair of oxen: in this they are very gay, beating a kind of kettle-drum, playing the tambourine, and sometimes singing in a very pleasing manner.

They often make little parties on the grass, where they spread their carpet, and draw forth some cold collation: their husbands seldom accompany them on

these excursions, but this proceeds more from indifference than jealousy.

The jealousy of the Turks arsies rather from a religious principle, than from any tendency to it in their disposition; for I have seldom heard of their being jealous of one another.

In former times, when a Christian was detected in an amour with a Turkish woman, if he chose to become a Turk, he was allowed to marry her—if not, his head was the price of his folly; now, if discovered, he is beheaded, and the partner of his fault is tied in a sack, and thrown into the sea. Not long ago, a Greek was suspected of an intrigue; spies were placed about him, and to one of his best friends, as he thought him, he divulged the secrets of his heart: he was immediately arrested, and his head cut off; the woman was drowned in the canal.

I have heard of a striking example of this kind. The great Carosman Oglu, prince of Natolia, drowned his sister, for having an amour with a Greek, saying, "forced believers believe nothing."

LETTER XXXIII.

Bàzars.—Hanns.—Hippodrome.—Obelisks. — Cisterns.—St. Sophia. — Kibab. — Opium Eaters.—Magicians.—Dervises.

Constantinople, 1806.

We appropriated this day to a ramble through Constantinople, to visit the Bazars, Hanns, the Hippodrome, St. Sophia, and the cisterns; and that we might not be under the necessity of returning home the whole day, we proposed dining in the Turkish style on kibab and sallad.

The morning was fine, and having crossed the water, we landed at Baluck-bazar, or the first market; in order to avoid the immense crouds that are con-

tinually passing and re-passing to the water side, we struck through the court of a small mosque which stands near it; this mosque has nothing about it to attract the attention, if I except its standing on a clear space, in the midst of a multitude of buildings, and the abundance of water which gushed from its fount.

The streets of Constantinople are very narrow and remarkably dirty; dead dogs lie in great numbers in them, and living ones swarm at every corner.

The Hanns or Khans, are large buildings of stone; some of them are great squares, and are several stories high: in these the merchants, whether residents or occasional comers, have fire-proof warehouses, in which to deposit their property. We paid a visit to Janni Khan, which consists of three squares; in this dwelt a Polonese of my acquaintance, who dealt in amber; he shewed

us many pieces of it, which were very curious; the trade in amber at Constantinople is considerable; it is in general carried on by Poles, to whom it is sent to an incredible amount from their own country; my friend had just received a caravan, as it is called, worth 300,000 piastres, or £20,000 sterling. The Turkish pipes are adorned with this gum; an amber mouth-piece of a proper size and colour, will bring as high as 5000 piastres; the amber most esteemed is of a light lemon colour, not transparent, and all of one shade. It is said that amber is a non-conductor; all smoke promiscuously out of the same pipe, even in the time when the plague rages, and receive no injury thereby; but as there has been no plague to any great degree here since my arrival, I have not had an opportunity of making the experiment, even though I had possessed the inclination. The Turkish pipes are frequently very costly, sometimes they are mounted with dia-

monds, and a mounting of pearls is quite common; the Turks set great value on them, and they descend from father to son like their jewels.

We took coffee and pipes with our Polish friend, and he accompanied us in our ramble through the Bazars.

Bazars I have already told you, are market places, where articles of every description are exposed to sale; they here form many streets, and being all covered in, afford no unpleasant walks during the heat of the day, or in bad weather; they are all fire-proof, and seldom or never suffer by that destructive element, unless it is kindled by incendiaries.

The Bazar of arms is a gratifying sight; it forms a square, the inside of which is intersected by several regular streets; in these are exposed every species of arms;

we saw here abundance of Damascus swords, and plenty of Circassian bows and arrows. The Bazar of jewels is also very extensive; as the orientals make great use of precious stones, particularly diamonds, this Bazar is extremely rich. We paid a visit to a jeweller; he shewed us diamonds, rubies, and pearls to an immense amount, as likewise several turquoises, but these are by no means so plenty, so pretty, or so much valued as they are in Christendom. In the Bazar of India shawls, called Lahour shawls, we saw some of very great value, and of the most beautiful colour and texture; that in which rich stuffs are sold is dazzling to the eye; whole streets are lined with costly brocade of silver and gold, and of the most lively colours. The air throughout all the Bazars was scented with the most delicate perfumes, proceeding from that quarter where odours are sold; a gentle breeze added

to this the sweet scented aloes wood, which the Turks delight to burn in their pipes.

The Bazars are shut up every evening at an early hour, and no one is allowed to remain in them but the guard which patroles there through the night, to prevent fire and robbery: during the day the merchant with the greatest safety leaves his shop in the hands of his neighbour, or simply with a net drawn across, when called away to attend any other business; the shops are all raised like the table of a tailor, the merchant sits cross-legged upon a table in front, and his goods are exposed on shelves behind him. All descriptions of people here sit cross-legged at work, from the smith at his anvil, to the carpenter with his saw.

The Bazar of slaves is a most shocking place; they are backward at exposing their slaves to infidels; the fair slaves are

kept confined, and never shewn but to purchasers, when they are turned out to be exposed to the rude hand and eye of insulting barbarity. We saw only a few black women.

You have heard much of the Hippodrome at Constantinople; it is a large equestrian square of 1375 feet in length, and 250 in breadth; its sides are very irregular. On the eastern side the Sultan Achmet, built one of the finest mosques in Turkey; the western is occupied in part by a palace almost in ruins, in a quarter of which the Sultan keeps some of his wild beasts; we found here two fine lions, and some tigers of a very large size: near the south end of the square stand the remains of a triple brazen serpent, supposed to have been the tripod which stood over the mephitic air in the temple of the Delphi; the serpent has lost his heads, which were struck off with a battle axe by Mahomet

the Second, in order to shew his prowess. Near the centre of the square stand two obelisks of granite, one of them of very fine workmanship, with several hieroglyphic figures on it in a perfect state, which is wonderful in a country, where from a religious persuasion, every sort of sculpture is defaced. The other is much decayed; the pedestals of both are of white marble, and have been finely wrought in relief, but these the barbarians have mutilated in a terrible manner, and the inscriptions are totally obliterated, so that now every thing is left to conjecture relative to their origin. These three relics of antiquity are said to have been brought here by Constantine the Great.

Not far from the Hippodrome are the remains of a large cistern, which it is supposed was for containing a supply of water in the city, in case of a siege, but this must be an erroneous idea, as the

water which surrounds it could easily be used in cases of emergency. Part of this cistern is now used for the spinning of silk, the roof of which is supported by 300 pillars of white marble; near this is another piece of the same size, and the architecture and the level being likewise the same, it is to be presumed that they are both portions of one great whole, of which many parts are filled up, or unopened; the descent to these is by a stair of seventy steps, some of stone and some of wood.

Near the cistern is a tower of porphyry, of considerable height, which has been much shaken by thunder or earthquake; it is now girt about by hoops of brass: I have heard it said that the jews made a purchase of this tower for the value of the stone, but that they found it so strongly jointed together that it was impossible to take it asunder without breaking it in pieces, and that after many

fruitless attempts the Turks obliged them to hoop it together as it now stands.

We were not fortunate enough to get admission into the famous church of St. Sophia, which seems to have served as a model for all the fine churches in Constantinople: it stands near the gate of the Seraglio called the Sublime Porte; I have taken the following description of it from an Italian author.

" St. Sophia is a mosque justly esteemed amongst the most valuable treasures about Constantinople. Constantine the Great built this temple in honor of the divine wisdom, and dedicated it to St. Sophia. In a dreadful sedition which arose in the capital, St. Sophia was demolished and almost reduced to ashes: the emperor Justinian, anxious for its preservation, re-built it with greater sumptuousness and elegance; it has eight entrances, including the porch of St.

the Alcoran, which being made in the form of a flag, hangs from one of the columns: this piece of cloth was once part of the lining of a rich carpet which forms the door curtain of the mosque at Mecca."

The porch of St. Sophia, in which the patriarch of Constantinople was wont to perform divine service, is now occupied for the same purpose by the Turks; near it stand the Alcoran and other books which contain prayers to be recited on certain days and hours. The church has four towers, in which there used to be bells of a very great height, and of remarkably small diameter, near the summit, which is of brass gilt, they have a little balcony, from which the musaim or priest calls the five hours of prayer.

St. Sophia has fountains and baths near it, at which the musulmen perform the ablutions commanded in their law.

In honour of the Turks it must be said, that, although now a Turkish mosque, St. Sophia retains all the revenue which it enjoyed when a Christian church, and this is immense. Even Mahomet the Second, conqueror of Constantinople, although his treasury was exhausted by tedious wars, never infringed upon it. It was said, that, in 1738, it exceeded fifty thousand pounds: it is drawn from lands and palaces, besides large sums paid by the Sultan, which were formerly given by the Greek emperors and princes for the privilege of building churches; this revenue is employed in keeping the temple in repair, and in cleaning it; in paying those who perform service in it; in the education of youth; and in daily charities to an immense number of destitute poor. The surplus is put into a case, and is called the sacred treasure; it is afterwards employed in useful purposes.

It is the duty of the Sultan to go to

St. Sophia the first Friday of every moon: Friday, you know, is the day of the week which mussulmen devote to the service of God. The usual mode in which the Sultans go is on horseback, but when young it is not uncommon for them to walk thither. St. Sophia being so near the gate of the seraglio, Selim has of late preferred going to a mosque at a greater distance, that his subjects might have a better view of their prince. When he was in the habit of going to St. Sophia, the cavalcade was scarcely in motion before it reached the church, which occasioned much inconvenience, and obliged the spectators to huddle together, insomuch that many were hurt.

The Sultan goes every Friday, if in health, to public worship, and more than once a tumult has arisen when a fortnight has elapsed without his shewing himself publicly to his people, lest he should have been poisoned or imprisoned.

We were now tired of wandering about, and felt inclined to retire to some corner to take our Turkish dinner; a cook-shop soon presented itself, and we entered and ordered kibab and sallad: we found several Turks at dinner, each with a small stool before him, covered with a large tinned plate, eating his favorite national dish. To make kibab, they mince very fine the fleshy part of mutton, with which they mix spicery and herbs, and then stick it on small skewers; these skewers are then hung in a kind of oven, which opens at the top; the kibab is occasionally basted with a savoury sauce, and when sufficiently baked is brought to table; bread is then laid in slices on a large plate, and the kibab put upon it, and some, by way of improvement, pour yahourh (a kind of sour cream) over the whole, which makes it very good. We had some done both ways, and upon that and a fine sallad made a most hearty dinner. From this description of kibab you may imagine it

is an excellent dish; I have often met with it in French families, where it is tied up in paper, and roasted; but the other is far superior, and is made better in cook-shops than in private houses. Our repast was washed down with a cup of sherbet, perfumed with rose water.

Sherbet is made by pouring water on a paste formed of dried raisins; it is very pleasant in warm weather, and is the common beverage with the mussulmen, who drink neither wine nor strong liquors: they prepare sherbet in different ways, that is, they put in other ingredients, but I believe the paste is always the principal article.

During dinner, we were much amused by the gestures of a story-teller, who excited in no small degree the risible faculties of his countrymen. We, however, could not partake in the humour of his story, although the pantomime was very entertaining.

After dinner we made an attempt to see some opium eaters; but though we fell in with two or three of them, yet none of them chose to eat any at that time. Some of these fellows will swallow, one after another, three pills of opium each as large as a horse-bean; they drink a glass of water after each pill, and then some fall into convulsions; they are most pitiful looking beings, their complexions are sallow and sickly, their faces are distorted, their eyes hollow, and they are chronic in all their joints. It is quite a mistaken idea that all Turks take opium; very few indeed use it, and those who do are regarded as drunkards are in Great Britain, a disgrace to themselves and society.

The Turks have great faith in magicians; they are resorted to on all occasions, and it is astonishing with what credulity they are believed in, from the Sultan to the lowest of his slaves.

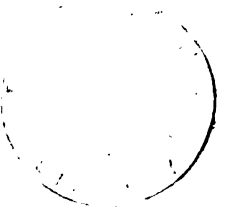
On our return from Constantinople, we descended to the water side by the Bazar where tobacco is sold, on purpose to see some magicians, who commonly sit there: that we might not be observed, we entered a tobacco shop, and got pipes; nearly opposite us were two sturdy fellows, with green turbans, which denote them to be descendants of Mahomet, sitting cross-legged on a low bench: a number of females were standing at no great distance waiting for advice. Before each of the magicians sat a woman with her head in his lap telling her complaint, whilst he kept his hands on her head, feeling her temples and forehead, and muttering somewhat which only she could hear; when he had done this, the lady arose, gave him money, and walked off to make room for the next. These men, besides solving curious questions, I am told, give advice in physic, and perform cures by magic.

In our descent we met with several

dervises, another set of strange artful beings, who perform tricks with great skill and dexterity; they in general feign a sort of derangement, but here they are prohibited from those acts of brutality, which, in other places, they commit with impunity.

A friend of mine lately played a droll trick on two dervises, whom he had engaged to amuse a party of friends with their feats: he had in his house an excellent electrifying machine, from which he had conducting wires into his sitting-room, and for that night to the part of the sopha on which the dervises sat: after they had performed a great variety of tricks, stuck several needles in their eyes, &c. he began to display his skill, and discharged such a quantity of electric fluid, that the poor religioni were sadly disconcerted; they, however, resumed their tranquillity, and were proceeding to fill their pipes, but these, alas! they were

not permitted to enjoy, for a second shock made them start to their feet, and run out of the house, crying the devil was certainly there, and no inducement could prevail on them again to enter it.



LETTER XXXIV.

Dance of the Dervises.—Singular Instruments which they use.

Constantinople, 1806.

I CANNOT quit Constantinople without giving you an account of a curious entertainment which I witnessed last Friday.

In company with some friends, I went to a small mosque in the road from Pera to Galata, to see the sacred dance of the Dervises, which really afforded us great amusement. The mosque, chapel, or

dancing-room, for I know not which of these titles is the best suited to it, was of a circular form; we sat in a small gallery, in which was stationed the music; this consisted of two pair of small kettle drums, and four reeds or kind of flutes; the music of these reeds was very sweet and soft, and some most melodious airs were played on them by dervises. Opposite the door, at the extremity of the circle, sat upon a cushion the chief of the dancing party: in a short time, a number of dervises, with long flowing robes like petticoats, and high caps like sugar loaves on their heads, came in, and walked in procession round the room with their hands crossed upon their breasts, each saluting their chief as they passed him with a grand incurvation of the body, so that the sugar-loaf almost kissed the ground: after parading thus about three or four times, every one as he passed wheeled round upon his heel, and twirled like a top; the loose robes became

filled with air, and made a most grotesque appearance. This twirling continued without intermission, when all at one moment ceased, and went again, as before, in procession round the room several times; the twirling then commenced again, and lasted at least a quarter of an hour: these ceremonies were repeated three or four times, and then the party dispersed.

It often happens, that these poor wretches, from turning round with such velocity, become giddy and fall into trances; when this happens, they are surrounded by their companions, and are supposed to see visions; all the words they utter during these moments are treasured up as those of inspiration.

We were upon the whole diverted with

this spectacle; but could not help pitying the poor creatures, who must certainly have turned their brains by their exertions; they are sallow, ghastly, dirty-looking beings, and covered with vermin of more kinds than one; their dress is coarse and simple, and they generally carry some ridiculous instrument about them, which makes them appear as if they were insane, whether they are really so or not; they have likewise another instrument which they always carry. For some time I could not comprehend what use they made of this; it has some resemblance to a long shanked spoon, with teeth like a rasp; they employ it for scratching themselves, as their law positively forbids them to do this with their fingers.

I am now about to bid adieu to Constantinople, in my way to Old England: when I arrive at Smyrna, I will

give you an account of my journey, and of the Troas, where I mean to pass a few days. I will send to you likewise my promised statement of the trade of the port of Smyrna.

LETTER XXXV.

Voyage—Tumulus of Achilles.—Journey.—Plains of Troy.—Sarcophagi.—Port of Alexandria.—Ruins.—River Simois.—Baths.—Mount Ida.—Garden.—Dardanelles.—Exports.

Smyrna, June 1806.

I NOW hasten to fulfil my promise of giving you an account of my voyage from Constantinople to this place. That I might have an oppportunity of visiting the site of ancient Troy, I took my passage on board of a Turkish boat for the Dardanelles. We sailed about mid-day, and after a very quick passage of sixteen hours, were already anchored there. Having passed the entrance of

the straight before day-light, I cannot pretend to give you a full account of it; but from the information I received at the Dardanelles, I had no great cause of regret, as I had passed neither town nor fortification worthy of notice. At the Dardanelles I was courteously invited by the Venetian Consul, Signor Cheali, to take up my abode at his house during my stay, an offer which I accepted in preference to that of our own consul, Signior Taragano, a jew, who was however also very courteous. Having, indeed, several letters of recommendation, all the consuls strove to make my stay as agreeable as possible, and to shew me every attention in their power. Signior Cheali is a Venetian of about seventy-five years of age: he and my friend Doctor Lorenzo left Italy together, and although he has lived upwards of forty years at a distance from his native land, he still retains all the manners of a Venetian. The inhabitants of the Dardanelles are

chiefly Jews and Greeks, very few Turks, and still fewer Europeans.

The day after my arrival, early in the morning I embarked on board of a Turkish boat called a bider, with five pair of oars, and rowed down as far as the lowest castle of the Dardanelles, a distance of about eight miles, where I landed immediately under the Tumulus of Achilles, when I took horses to cross the plain to the ruins of Alexandria Troas. The Tumulus of Achilles stands on an eminence, and the view from it is extensive. I stopped a few minutes on its summit, where a Turk, according to his last injunctions, has been interred. A Greek whom I took along with me as interpreter and cicerone, informed me that the Tumulus had been opened by a Frenchman, but that after digging to a considerable depth, he had found nothing to reward his labour.

From thence we rode for some hours over a fine plain, having much the appearance of a gentleman's park, being beautifully diversified by groups of tall trees, and the ground in general well cultivated. The peasants, though few in number, were busily employed in weeding and hoeing the cotton plant, which appeared to be the principal article of culture. About the middle of the plain we passed a chifflick of the late Hassan Pacha, high admiral of the Turkish fleet, who has here built a fine chiosk of stone, which has the appearance of a small fortification. Near the sea immediately opposite to Tenedos is to be seen a large Tumulus, but my cicerone was ignorant of its title, and assured me indeed that it had none. At mid-day the guide insisted upon halting a short time to refresh our horses, which we did at a small village called Jecklu: with difficulty the Greek procured a few eggs, which we dressed for our dinners. The inhabitants, old and

young, on seeing a Frank, ran to collect what medals they had, and which I purchased for a trifle: few valuable ones are now found, being chiefly Roman, and not of first rate workmanship. After our repast in the cool of the evening our route lay near the margin of the sea, through a well wooded country, where yearly some ship loads of valonea or acorns, are collected from a species of dwarf oak which abounds. We passed many vineyards close to the sea side, which are cultivated by the inhabitants of Tenedos, many of whom come over in the spring and erect temporary dwellings for that purpose. The wine of Tenedos may thus with much more propriety be called Troy wine, as the grape, when ripe, is carried over, and only trodden out on the island.

For the large guns which the Turks are fond of having in their fortresses they use balls of granite; of these the plain of

Troy has afforded immense numbers, and the innumerable and beautiful columns which once covered its surface, have by degrees been almost entirely destroyed for that purpose. I saw many piles of balls, some of which, I am confident, were at least three feet in diameter.

To pass the night my cicerone carried me to the house of an old Turk close by the sea, and in an enchanting situation, about a quarter of a mile distant from the port of Alexandria. Some female visitors having previously occupied his miserable dwelling, I was forced to put up with the stable, which, however, gave me little uneasiness. The master sent me some milk, and having a cold fowl with me, I made a hearty supper. After desiring that I might be called at the first hour of prayer, I endeavoured to get a little sleep, but which, on account of myriads of fleas, was not undisturbed.

The old Turk, faithful to his promise, called me by four o'clock: he was a man of an interesting countenance, but one who has destroyed more antiquities than he has hairs on his bushy beard; for being a worker in marble, his whole study is to find out the best marble, which he immediately converts into grave stones for his infidel race. He had very lately dug up and destroyed two fine sarcophagi, one of white, the other of grey marble, a piece of each being near his house. On finding the sarcophagi, he said he had requested a learned Greek to interpret an inscription which was on that of white marble; but all that he could recollect was, that it related to a warrior of extraordinary strength and renown, and mentioned that his favorite horse was buried near him: he further informed me that the white sarcophagus contained all the bones of a human skeleton of prodigious size, those of the head only being wanting.

We were conducted round the port of Alexandria, where many magazines are still visible, particularly a large one which the old man called the Custom House. The port was now quite choaked up, but it was clearly of a circular form, with a narrow entrance, and probably was never capable of admitting any thing but small craft.

Piles of ruins without form or number shew where a town once stood. A little farther from the sea appear huge remains of an amphitheatre, of which only the western end preserves any shape; the other parts are nearly buried in the earth. Keeping to the westward we behold three lofty arches of white marble, which formed the grand entrance to the Stadium; the middle one is very striking; the other two are rather smaller. Farther on are nine large and three small arches, all of granite. The whole of these ruins have a charming effect, being

in the middle of a forest of lofty trees, and I am convinced that a week spent here would amply repay the attention of the curious traveller.

Crossing the rising ground to the northward, I passed an old gateway, and the remains of a wall, and after about an hour's ride, descended to the river Simois, now little more than a rivulet. Here are baths of a strong mineral quality, and the water is very disagreeable both to the taste and smell, being highly impregnated with nitre; indeed, the whole country round is full of nitre, and not long ago the Turks used to collect large quantities. The heat of the baths I reckoned to be equal to that of Nero's bath, near Naples, which boils an egg in three minutes; there is, however, this difference, that the baths of Nero run under ground for a considerable way; whereas, these are immediately exposed to the air; yet I could scarcely bear my finger in the water. Some

charitable Turk or Greek has built small apartments for bathing, and at certain seasons they are filled with people from the islands, who come to try the efficacy of the waters in various disorders.

Following the windings of the river, I several times crossed a broad ancient causeway, and at one place a very large column of granite almost entire, wanting only the base and architrave. As this column lay close by the side of the road, I could not but feel surprised that it had so long escaped being sawn in pieces.

About nine o'clock we halted at the village of Kimalee, to take some refreshment: at this village are still to be seen, in a tolerably entire state, the remains of a Roman bath, but nothing else worthy of notice, the village itself being a miserable one, and thinly inhabited by Greeks. About mid-day, after a wearisome ride over a bare country, we at

length reached the foot of Mount Ida, said to have been the seat of ancient Troy, of which not the least vestige remains to point out on which of these mountains it stood. On the most northern are two tumuli, which are said to cover the remains of Hector and his wife: these tumuli are by no means so large as the Grecian ones on the south side of the plain, and although they have been opened, are said to have contained nothing remarkable. There is a most enchanting view from the summit of Mout Ida, and at the foot of it is the source of the Scamander, which is remarkably curious; the whole side of the hill is one general fountain. To the west it has the appearance as if Nature had just raised a little that side of the base, to let the waters gush out: at first sight, indeed, it is difficult to determine whether art has not even been employed in the work, which appears as if formed of stone and lime. Some slight vestiges of

baths are still to be traced near these fountains, but are not worthy of investigation.

The plain before presents a charming view, being covered here and there with large trees, while the Scamander winding amongst them, empties itself into the sea above the castle, where we first landed. Several of the islands at the mouth of the Hellespont are faintly seen, whilst Tenedos, more lofty and near, shews a rounded form. Immediately below the mountain, on the borders of a marshy piece of ground, is an extensive garden, called in the Turkish tongue Bunar Baschee, or the Garden of the Fountain, which was cultivated by Greeks, and produced good fruit; from it I procured a basket of cherries and a sallad, on which I dined. Although this was on the 11th of June, yet the cucumbers and various other vegetables were in a backward state. In this garden I found a

piece of marble, part of an ancient bas relief: on it were two figures, the one a man, the other a woman with a child in her arms: I supposed it to be Hector, taking leave of Andromache and his son. His head appeared inclined mournfully toward them; his right hand on the head of the boy, whilst the left was stretched forth as if toward the army. The Greeks here could give me no intelligence of any thing worthy of being seen, and appeared, indeed, wholly ignorant of the country they were in. Again mounting our horses, we took the nearest road in order to reach the Dardanelles before night: for a short time we rode by the side of the Scamander, which having forded, we travelled across a most delightful plain for some distance, until at length our path led us up the hills. From the summit of the hills the view of the Hellespont is very grand. The wind having been northerly for some days, many ships were lying interspersed

about the channel, waiting a change. Among the rest was an English four-masted ship, with the appearance of which, the late Capitan Pacha some years ago was so much struck, that he ordered a model to be made, and one of equal dimensions to be built immediately after, and which is at present with the Turkish fleet in the arsenal of Constantinople.

Excepting a constant variety of scenery, nothing further remarkable occurred in this part of my ride, until about ten in the evening I alighted at the door of my Venetian friend.

There is little about the Dardanelles to interest the attention of the traveller; the only beautiful spot in the vicinity is a walk by the side of a river, shaded by a great number of lofty plantanes, which afford a cool retreat at all hours of the day: I had met with nothing

equal to this in any part of Turkey, and indeed nothing finer in any part of the world.

An order which had arrived from the Porte a short time before, not to allow strangers to visit the fortifications, disappointed me in my expectations of seeing them. The fort on the Asiatic side is built quite close to the water's edge, and has mounted on that side of it several guns of an astonishing calibre. Some of the granite shot lying about the fortress are not less than ten feet and a half in diameter, and are said to weigh from eight to ten cwt. Round the fortress is a ditch, but without water, and even if full it would not take a man above the middle. To the south of the fort is a small mound battery of six or eight brass guns of considerable length, but of no uncommon calibre. On the top of the fort are planted many long swivels, carrying a ball of about half a pound. On

the European side of the channel, and immediately opposite to the Dardanelles, is built another fort of the same kind, but apparently of better construction, and on a rising ground. The first battery is closer to the water; the second of an oval shape, is visible from the opposite shore. In this, as in all other Turkish fortresses, there is a mixture of guns of very large calibre. In the lower castle of Smyrna there are several, into which, when on fishing parties, I have more than once crept to avoid a shower.

To force the passage of the Dardanelles must be an undertaking truly formidable. From the lower castles on both sides of the Hellespont, little danger is to be apprehended, as ships can steer tolerably clear of them; but the fire from those at the Dardanelles, where the channel becomes narrow, and the current remarkably strong, must be very destructive. It would, however, be no difficult matter

to storm the castle on either side, particularly that on the Asiatic, which has few or no guns toward the land; and that on the European is commanded by neighbouring heights. One or both of them being taken, the passage would then be of no difficulty, and without that, no commander of moderate force would think of attempting it, unless he wished his fleet to be destroyed, as with a tolerable breeze, even of southerly wind, a vessel moves so very slowly, that every shot from these castles must tell. This point gained, Constantinople lies at the mercy of every enemy, without fort or gun to defend it, if we except a few saluting batteries—one at Tophana, one at the arsenal, and a few scattered guns at the Seraglio Point, of various lengths and calibres, placed there for the same purpose, without any kind of embrazures or works to cover them.

The population of the Dardanelles is

computed to be between twenty or thirty thousand souls, which, however, appears to me an exaggeration. It is true, a great proportion is composed of Jews, who huddle together six or eight families in the same house.

As I know you are eager after commercial information, I will endeavour to give you some idea of the exports from the Dardanelles. The principal is cotton wool, of which 80,000 quintals of nearly an English cwt. each, are annually sold here; of cotton yarn 1000 quintals; galls 300 quintals; valonea 50,000; rosin 2,000; madder roots 200; anniseed 100; of cotton sail cloth, in pieces of eighty yards each, 10,000; hare skins 10,000; a small quantity of bees' wax; a few cargoes of excellent grain, and between the Dardanelles and Tenedos about twenty tolerable cargoes of wine. Their imports are very trifling, and not worthy of notice.

LETTER XXXVI.

Voyage.—Tenedos.—Coast of Troy.—Mytilene — Port of Olivet. — Medals. — Gulph of Sandarlee.—Sclavonians.—Arrival at Smyrna.

Smyrna, June 1806.

I WITH pleasure resume the agreeable task of writing to you. That I might have an opportunity of seeing as much as possible in my way from the Dardanelles hither, I again embarked in my Turkish boat, manned by six sturdy Turks, to row in case of contrary winds; and scarcely had we passed the lower castles, than we found our oars necessary. They tugged the whole of the day, and by the close of the evening we had only reached the harbour of Tenedos. This island you well

know is situated about eight miles to the south of the coast of Troy; the chief inhabitants are Greeks, whose only commerce is wine, which is excellent, and not unlike claret. The port is tolerably safe; a small island lies to the north of it, which breaks the sea, and renders the water within very smooth. At the west end of the harbour is a tolerable fort, and which, if in good hands, would completely defend it.

The wind continued contrary, and I remained here all night in my boat, stretched out upon my sea mattress, and covered with a sail, which my Turks set up in the form of an awning. Thus provided I apprehended no danger from the night air in this fine climate, and I received none.

The prospect next day was no better, the wind still continuing contrary. I was thus obliged to remain another whole day at this miserable place, which afforded

nothing to amuse or interest me. I wandered about through their vineyards, and to the top of the highest hill, from whence I enjoyed a grand view of the coast of Troy, Mount Ida, the entrance of the Hellespont, and many islands at a distance.

In the evening the wind abated considerably, and the boatmen gave me to understand, that about midnight, *Ishalla*, (God willing) they intended putting to sea. On this information, my careful servant immediately began to prepare a large Turkish stew of lamb, and made an addition to our sea stock of a few bottles of Rakkee, a kind of brandy, into which mastic and anniseed are put whilst distilling, and which, with water, makes no disagreeable beverage. A little before midnight, therefore, we got under weigh, and rowed to the east end of the island, from which we made a tack over to the coast of Troy. The wind continuing right a-head, the boatmen rowed all night, and

morning bringing no change, they still continued to labour incessantly at the oar. Our stew and Rakkee had a good effect in giving them fresh courage, of the latter of which they made large potations, in spite of the law of Mahomet. About mid-day we had weathered Cape Baba, when, hoisting our sail, we made a tack over to Mytilene. By this time some relaxation was absolutely necessary, and we ran into a neck at the north end of the island, where we anchored.

After not more than a single hour's repose, we again took up our anchor, and, coasting the island close under its lee for many miles, about eleven at night, we arrived in safety at Port Olivet, on its eastern extremity. I never saw such indefatigable men as those Turks were, having rowed almost incessantly for four-and-twenty hours, with the interval of only one hour's repose; for, even when under sail, they kept the oars at work. The boat went

with great rapidity; and, if you will take the trouble to examine the map, you cannot fail to be struck with the distance which we made.

Mytilene is one of the most fertile of the Grecian islands. Its chief commerce is in oil, of which large quantities are produced here: and likewise no inconsiderable quantity of wine and silk. The Port of Olivet is pleasantly situated, and when ships are in they are in perfect safety; but the entrance is not wholly free from danger. The Turks build here a good many ships of war: two fine corvettes nearly finished were now on the stocks.

Near the town are the ruins of a temple, said to have been dedicated to Jupiter, but in such a state, as to afford little solid foundation to any conjecture. I made enquiry after medals, and a Greek, whom I had formerly seen at Leghorn went all over the town in quest of some. At length,

he brought a man who, with great gravity, informed me that he had two of immense value, and immediately, from a long purse with great ceremony, he drew out his treasure, which was enveloped in various coverings of paper. These invaluable medals consisted of a Venetian ducat, struck during one of the latest Doges, and a piece of copper so smooth that neither letter nor figure could be traced upon it. Equally in vain I sought amongst the women for the beauties formerly so renowned. I saw none with either good features, or complexion, or who could in any wise be compared with the ladies of Scio, who are undoubtedly the handsomest of the Archipelago.

We stopped all the day at Mytilene. Early in the evening, however, the Turks, being completely refreshed, resumed their oars that we might gain sight of the opposite shores before dark. About nine o'clock we entered the fine Gulph of San-

darlee, whence many cargoes of corn are annually shipped, although contrary to the Turkish laws. In this Gulph we had a curious rencounter with some Sclavonians. Rowing close under the land by fine moonlight, we passed several ships at anchor, from one of which we were hailed in a furious manner, with many threats of sinking our boat. At first, we were wholly at a loss to understand them; but passing close under their stern, we discovered about thirty men armed with large blunderbusses, &c. on the quarter-deck. They spoke at first in their own barbarous jargon, which we not understanding, I addressed them in Italian, and enquired who was the captain amongst them. The captain then cried out, that he had mistaken us for pirates; on which head, having satisfied him, and reproached him for his cowardice in being afraid of a small open boat with so few people in it, we rowed away. Soon afterwards we rested a few hours, until the land breeze

had become pretty strong, when we again proceeded on our voyage; and coasting past Phocea and the islands in the Gulph before the ensuing night, we arrived in safety at Smyrna.

LETTER XXXVII.

Account of the Exports and Imports of Smyrna.

Smyrna, July 1806.

In one of my former letters I promised you an account of the exports and imports of this busy place, which promise I now hasten to fulfil. You will observe that this statement, or as it is called, Cargazoon, is formed from the exports and imports of Frank nations; and that in addition to it, another of nearly the same extent may be estimated, as the amount of the commerce carried on in ships of the country and to the Russian market, of which I have not found it possible to procure any account.

IMPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS FROM						
	London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Bales of Cloth		1182	159	90	25	297	
Cases of Caps		29	69	19		87	
Saroons of Indigo	45	38	66				20
Hogsheads of Coffee	61	6	49				90
Bags of ditto							2500
Cases of Raw Sugar			373		25		629
Hogsheads of Loaf ditto	240	90					200
Barrels of Cochineal		21	16	5		2	
Sacks of Pepper	240		578		19		1000
Bales of Shalloons	182	6	1				

IMPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS FROM London	Triest	Leghorn.	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America.
Bales and Cases of Muslins	26	239	2		30	1	4
Bales and Cases of Paper	2	207	767	67	1	155	
Bales of Manufacture		70		3			
Cases of Silk Stuff		34	38		1	4	
Cases of Velvet		3	5	5			
Boxes of Gold Lace		7	14	1		1	
Cases of Watches	8	42	1			1	
Cases of Manufactured Cotton	1	230	32	1	4	8	
Ditto of Cinnamon			24				
Ditto of Glass		546		561			

IMPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS FROM						
	London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Cases of Crystal	281						
Ditto of Ironmongery		21		10	43	2	
Ditto of Porcelaine		39			26		
Ditto of Nutmegs			1				
Ditto of Cloves		8	3		12		
Ditto of Linen	1	121	3			1	
Ditto of Venetian Treacle		17		12			
Barrels of Ginger			21				21
Ditto of Tin	1034	1			56		
Pieces of Steel		2014			45		

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS FROM London	Trieste	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Barrels of Nails		1000	400		290		
Ditto of Arsenick		60				3	
Jars of Vitriol		120		160			
Barrels of Quicksilver		20					
Ditto of Snuff		3816			19	20	2
Bales of Woollen Stuffs		42					
Cases of Trinkets	10	77	1			23	
Ditto of Cutlery		28	9		11		
Barrels of Iron Wire		65			20		
Ditto of White Lead		132	791	6	59	25	

IMPORT LIST.

IN SHIPS FROM

ARTICLES.	London	Trieste	Leghorn	Venice.	Holland	Marseilles	America
Pieces of Lead	177	7					
Boxes of Tin Plates	1282		32				
Ditto of Drugs					45		
Cases of divers Merchandise	47	154	49	16	43	51	
Bags of Lead Shot		972				10	
Pieces of Dye Wood		225	2495		1599	7494	000
Planks		13884					
Cases of Sulphur		344					
Puncheons of Rum	21	8	13				15

IMPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS FROM						
	London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Cases of Mirrors		37	1	2	2		
Crates of Earthen Ware	36						
Casks of Beer						270	

EXPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS TO London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Bales of Cotton Wool	223	12211	1548	104	865	6006	—
Ditto of Sheep's Wool	3	709	247	—	39	3846	—
Ditto of Goats and Camel's Hair	235	931	358	9	316	468	—
Sacks of Madder Root	1772	725	472	—	600	358	—
Bales of Red Yarn (Cotton)	—	1197	48	54	—	—	—
Ditto of White ditto ditto	61	299	68	25	36	—	2
Ditto of Hare Skins	—	148	29	20	—	94	—
Ditto of Saffron	—	307	13	—	—	61	—
Ditto of Buffalo Hides	—	3405	—	315	—	—	—
Barrels and Sacks of Yellow Berries	49	348	96	—	140	388	—

EXPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS TO London	Trieste	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Barrels and Sacks of Galls	294	450	19	—	418	227	16
Ditto and ditto of Bees Wax	—	160	48	2	—	37	—
Cases of Incense	—	38	—	—	—	—	—
Barrels of Dates	—	76	—	—	—	—	—
Sacks of Mocha Coffee	—	15	—	—	—	1	—
Bales of Spunges	191	162	—	—	28	—	—
Ditto of Silk	61	31	49	—	6	16	—
Ditto of Carpets	93	4	2	—	13	—	—
Cases of Sandrac	—	80	12	—	—	—	—
Bales of Anniseed	—	16	—	—	30	—	—

EXPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS TO						
	London	Trieste	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Bales of Senna	12	13			2	11	
Butts of Caviar		23	74				
Boxes of Scammonia	11	13	10			2	
Ditto of Gum Arabic	54	199	15		45	2	55
Ditto of Gum Dragant	44	106	2			103	
Ditto of Gum Armoniac	2				2		
Ditto of Gum Asafetida		2					
Ditto of Gum Mastic	2	24	24			2	
Bales of Mohair Yarn	109	562			200	93	
Cases of Gum Galbano		15					

EXPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS TO London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseilles	America
Cases of Jalep		33			15		
Ditto of Opium	38	52	41	1			60
Barrels of Old Copper		24	10	2	18		
Wedges of ditto		1216	739				
Pieces of Box Wood	7129				1944		
Cases of divers Drugs	112	180	12		11		
Cwt. of Barilla		190					
Ditto of Valonea		5729		9564		1020	
Ditto of Rock Alum		3010	713				
Barrels of Red Raisins	1692	4417	1547				100
Drums of ditto	257	460					

EXPORT LIST.

ARTICLES.	IN SHIPS TO London	Triest	Leghorn	Venice	Holland	Marseil'es	America
Barrels of Black Raisins	1263	2182	218				
Drums of Sultana ditto	3224	136	175				
Cases of Figs	7217	5470	1125				800
Barrels of ditto	169	297					
Cwts. of Emery Stone	2132				1000		
Bales of Goat Skins	12		35			2	
Barrels of Tallow	23	30					
Cases of Oil of Roses	7						
Ditto of Hides		5177	1250	69			
Killoes of Grain			697			1088	

This is an exact copy of the general cargazoon for the last year, both of exports and imports, by which you may form some idea of the trade of Smyrna. The prices in general are better to appearance than those of Constantinople; but, from various causes, in the end, are for the most part ruinous to the speculator.

I forget whether I ever mentioned to you the trade of Salonica in tobacco: I inclose you an account of it by Mr. Charnaud, our consul there, which may perhaps interest you.*

My memory is very incorrect, for I do not remember whether I mentioned in my former letters the mode of loading cargoes at Smyrna, by means of stiveing or stuffing, which is done with cables and capsterns, and the strength of a legion of porters. By this method a bale is pressed into about one third of its original size when stowed in the ship. By this

* See Appendix.

mischievous practice, the deck of the ship is hove up some inches, and her sides bulged out considerably, so that she becomes leaky at all parts, and though caulked several times perhaps in her passage, yet few ships reach Britain, who have not part of their cargoes ruined.

The mode of stowing upon end is also another bad practice here; by this means, particularly in carpets, the whole bale is destroyed if in the least hurt, as the carpets are folded longways, so that if the end be damaged, every one of them is ruined. The underwriters are greatly imposed on, in this respect, by the avarice of captains and owners, who, for a little additional freight, run the risk of ruining their whole cargo. I know of no place in the world where the compressing machine might be used with more propriety than here.

I am now about to leave Smyrna.

I embark for Malta to-morrow; and if possible, during my voyage, will give you my promised account of the different lazarettoes I have seen.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Quarantines.—Venice.—Leghorn.—Malta. Russia.—Great Britain.

Malta, August 1806.

I HAVE several times promised to send you an account of the different Lazarettoes which I have had an opportunity of examining, and of the precautions taken by various nations to prevent the introduction of plague or other infectious disorders amongst them. On revolving the matter in my own mind, however, I find so great a similarity in the forms and precautions used in all countries, that a particular account of each lazaretto would be unnecessary; I shall, therefore, in the first place, give you a sketch of the quarantine which

I performed at Venice, from which you may have a tolerably correct idea of the business.

All ships arriving in any Christian port of the Mediterranean, are obliged to submit to a strict scrutiny, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they come from infected ports, or have cargoes on board subject to quarantine. This scrutiny is attended to with peculiar strictness on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, on account of their more frequent and direct intercourse with the countries where plague is supposed to originate. Going from Turkey to Italy, every ship, upon her arrival within the jurisdiction of his Imperial Majesty, hoists a yellow flag, as a signal that no boat may come on board, nor any intercourse be permitted with the shore whilst it continues flying.

The lazaretto of Venice is upon one of

the small islands which lie between the Long Island and the main land, and which form the two entrances to the port, the one named Leobi, the other and principal one Malamoco. One lazaretto is prepared for the reception of passengers, and another for goods, subject to quarantine, or such as in England are called *enumerated*. The apartments for passengers are extensive and airy, and so divided, that every different party is kept separate, and some open spots are appropriated to walk in. On entering the lazaretto, the prior waits upon the party, and takes down the name and description of the person of each individual, from whence coming, and particularly the general state of healthiness in the port last sailed from.

Every lazaretto is governed by a prior and vice prior, who regulate all the internal government, and who go round at sun-set to lock up every party separately. A guardian is also appointed to each person,

for the purpose of observing that due obedience is paid to the rules of quarantine.

A market is held in a detached part, in which all the necessaries of life are exposed to sale, and where orders may be left for any thing wanted on the ensuing day, when it is regularly brought, and on terms, considering all the circumstances, highly reasonable.

The lazarettoes for goods are capacious, and each one capable of containing the cargo of a large ship, which, when landed, is distributed in a proper manner by a legion of porters, who, under a responsible guardian, turn over the merchandise daily to ventilate it, and who also open and repack the bales. These porters, of course, perform quarantine as long as the goods, the proprietors of which are charged with their wages. With a clean bill of health, that is to say, with a certificate of there

being no plague, goods in general perform a quarantine of thirty days; those with a foul bill, the full number of forty days. Passengers with a clean bill perform a quarantine of twenty days; and with a foul bill, thirty.

With all this appearance of strictness, it would not in the least surprise me to find the plague introduced into Italy. The passengers, it is true, are in appearance strictly kept asunder, yet the guardians being a set of miserable and unprincipled beings, particularly since the fall of the republic, will do any thing for money: and indeed, they themselves all meet in the house of the prior without any restraint, although some of them may have a month, and others but a day of seclusion to undergo.

In Leghorn the quarantine is well regulated; the parties are locked up on

entrance, and have liberty to come out only when the full time is elapsed, all the necessaries of life being handed through a wicker gate. The lazarettos there are also the finest and most commodious that can be imagined, being in an airy situation close upon the beach, and built like small fortresses, with a deep moat, and high wall around them. By means of this moat, which communicates with the sea, goods are received by boats into the lazaretto, and which, after having undergone their purgation, are sent by a canal into the town, from which they are at least a mile distant.

The quarantine at Malta is very strict, and the lazarettos in a deep creek behind the city of Valetta, are large and well adapted to the purpose. The greatest danger at Malta arises at the Health Office, where all parties meet together,

and mingle on the beach, although it is understood that they are not to touch each other.

In Russia, although nearer the seat of infection, the quarantine is singularly ridiculous. In Odessa they have now a tolerably good lazaretto, for passengers, but goods remain for the destined period on board the vessel. The regular period for passengers is eighteen days; but this is sometimes mitigated by dint of interest to eleven; meantime, however, the crews of all vessels meet together without reserve. At Taganrock, marquees are erected on the beach, where passengers are admitted to what is there denominated in the Italian phrase, *spoglio*, signifying to undress. On arriving, every individual comes on shore, when he is examined at the Health Office by a physician, who orders him to strip for that purpose. After this ceremony, all

return on board, and those who wish to perform their penance on shore return after four days, when there is a marquee prepared, in which they perform six days more; at the expiration of that time they are again examined by the physician, in the same manner as before; they are then smoked, and made to run naked down to the beach into the sea, through a crowd of spectators: being then purified from head to foot, fresh clothes are brought to them from the town, and they are allowed to mingle with the world.

Here, however, as at Odessa, all mingle together on the shore, even those who are in the sixth day of their quarantine, and those who are but just arrived from Constantinople; whilst the Captains of such ships as are nearly clear, make no scruple of carrying all the baggage of their friends into town, to be ready for

them on the day of examination. These foolish laws, if not altered, may one day introduce the pestilence into this immense empire.

Formerly only ships coming from the Levant were subject to scrutiny; but now that an infection equally destructive may be imported from the western world, a wise legislature ought to adopt measures to prevent this country from being plunged into a calamity of all others the most dreadful. Every ship from the West Indies ought to be examined before obtaining leave to communicate freely with the people of this country; but particularly ships from the ports of the United States, the inhabitants of which, would view at least with great indifference, the introduction of the yellow fever into their mother country. At present quarantine in Britain is a mere form, and we may admit in an hour what

we may lament for years. Why should the American merchant be less shackled than those trading to the Levant? Is the yellow fever less dangerous than the plague? In my opinion much more so. The plague can be communicated only by the touch. All Turkey trembled in 1804 for the yellow fever; and in Russia in 1805, ships from Spain and Malta were obliged to perform a more strict quarantine than those from Turkey on that account alone. The measures which I have heard are now about to be adopted by government are good, but they are on too limited a scale. A Health Office should be appointed in every port, and no ship of whatever nation, should be allowed to communicate with the shore, until after having undergone the most thorough examination.

Having thus given you a short account of the various customs and laws of qua-

rantine, such as I have had an opportunity of observing, I shall conclude with my sincere prayer that England may never have cause to repent the little attention which she has hitherto paid to this momentous subject.

APPENDIX.

LETTER RESPECTING ODESSA.

BY JOHN HENRY SIEVRAC,

Traveller for the Houses of Boesner and Company, of Brody and Odessa.

1804.

No. I.

Description of the Road, Port, and City of Odessa—Lazaretto, and deposit Warehouses—Air—Temperature—Fertility of the Soil—Victuals—Population—Regulation of the Posts—Loan-House, &c.

Odessa, August, 1804.

MESSRS. ———, *Marseilles.*

WITH real satisfaction do I transmit to you, Gentlemen, the information you request, respecting the chief ports of the northern coast of the Black Sea, which, by their peculiar situation and produce, or the industry of the inhabitants, might tend to establish some mercantile connexions with your own. You may the more safely rely on their perfect accuracy, as, independent of the local intelligence which I have made it my study to

procure, I have been favoured with remarks, equally pertinent and judicious, from persons of the highest rank and most unquestionable veracity.

I shall begin with the port of Odessa, as the most important, both on account of its advantageous situation, and the marked predilection shewn to it by the Russian government. But to give you a precise idea of it, I must necessarily represent what it was before the appearance of the present governor;* the rapid progress it is daily making, and the prospect of the superior rank which it is most likely to hold among the principal trading towns, not only of this part of the world, or the East, but of Europe itself.

The port of Odessa lies on the 46° 15" lat. to the west of a vast and most com-

* The noble, illustrious, and only remaining offspring of the celebrated Marshal de Richelieu.

modious gulph, formed by the Black Sea. It is distant about 40 wersts* from the Niester, and 80 from the Dnieper, two very considerable rivers, which discharge themselves into the said sea, and is, beyond doubt, of the easiest access, coming out of the channel of Constantinople. Its road, from six to eight wersts in breadth, and twenty in depth, with about eight fathoms of water and a most excellent ground, offers to vessels of all dimensions a most desirable anchorage. From a strong mole, which is nearly finished, a most beautiful and expensive key, about one werst and a half long, will lead to another much larger and stronger. The latter projects already far into the sea, and when finished, according to the plan, will protect the works, and particularly the ships from the S. and S.E. winds, the only ones to which they may be exposed.

* About three quarters of an English mile.

The bason formed by these two moles, filled at this very moment with about 200 vessels from 150 to 500 tons each, and capable of holding ten times as much, is incomparably pleasing to the eye; and being interspersed with several piers, is of the utmost convenience for the shipping of goods.

Adjoining the largest mole, and at the declivity of a mountain, is building with incredible rapidity* a most spacious lazaretto, a painful, but unfortunately too necessary precaution against the inevitable intercourse with the chief city of Turkey, which, however, for size, salubrity of air, proper distribution and neatness of apartments, will hardly be surpassed by any other building of the kind. Beside it are to be placed large imperial warehouses,

* No fewer than from two to three hundred men, of all descriptions, are daily employed in the construction of that building and the Mole.

for the purification of goods coming from the East, and also for those destined to lie by way of deposite, a privilege nearly equivalent to a *porto franco*, lately granted by the crown to this thriving city. Round all these will be erected several strong batteries, to protect the whole against any sudden and unexpected attack. But what completes the excellence of this port is, that it seldom or never freezes, so far as to interrupt the navigation at any period of the year.

The city of Odessa, situated on a gently rising hill, overlooks the harbour, and commands a most extensive view over the main sea from almost every corner of it. Nothing can be more noble or more sublimely beautiful than that incessant motion of ships coming in and out, some cleaving the waves with proud and lofty sails, swelled by gentle zephyrs that seem to sport with them, others steering along

with scanty canvas, to evade the tremendous fury of the raging winds.*

The air of Odessa is perfectly salubrious, the temperature mild, and the fertility of the soil such as would create amazement, were one less acquainted with the passive and indolent disposition of the men in whose possession it was before the Russians conquered it.

At first, provisions of all sorts were scarce, consequently far from cheap, but in proportion as the stepps† grow popu-

* This unspeakable pleasure I enjoy every morning without moving my head from the pillow, only ordering the window of my bedchamber to be opened.

† The stepps, so called by the people of that country, are a wide extent of land, of a most excellent quality, hitherto uncultivated for want of hands, or rather that spirit of industry which gives life to every thing.

lated, and the inhabitants are sure of a speedy and advantageous market for their rural produce, all the necessaries of life become abundant and diminish in price. Moldavia and Hungary supply it both with common and fine wines. The new colonists of the environs of the town furnish it with daily provisions of cattle, fowls, game, and vegetables of all sorts. The sea, and particularly the large neighbouring ponds, abound with a surprising variety of fish. In short, I hesitate not to say, that Odessa is, at this very day, as cheap a place to live in as any one of any importance in the rest of Europe. For some time water has been scarce and of a bad quality; but of late, by dint of care, trouble, and expense, several abundant springs have been found out about the city, which are more than sufficient to supply it. Fuel alone is and will long be scarce and valuable. Indeed, with the exception of a few hundred fruit trees in and about the town, there is not lite-

rally a single bush within 150 or 200 wersts around it. Such, however, has been the astonishing success of some plantations that have been attempted, that, with little encouragement, there is no doubt but in due process of time one could not only be supplied with this essential article, but even enjoy the pleasure of a few ornamental trees.

If it were possible to call into question how far the administration of a wise, firm, and vigilant chief can influence the prosperity of a new settlement, the city of Odessa alone, by the wonderful rapidity of its progress, would evince it in a most striking degree. Like every rising colony, it was at first populated with a handful of vagabonds, and adventurers of all sorts and nations, people without any principles of education or morality, to whom every method of acquiring wealth was eligible, so that it conduced to a rapid fortune. Some of these inevitably intermeddled with

the authority, and injustice and vexations of all kinds of course ensued. Men of the first respectability, whom the most laudable spirit of enterprise had drawn hither, were shamefully tormented, nay brought to the very brink of ruin, and through that many others were deterred from every ultimate trial of the place.

Another monstrous abuse, of a very different nature, had hitherto proved no less detrimental to the merchants of Odessa; and this was the scandalous impunity with which some members of the Polish nobility could either totally elude the purport of the most sacred contracts, or fulfil them in whatever point they pleased, without any regard to the appointed time of delivery, and too often to the specified quality or quantity of wheat, although they had previously received the amount of it. Now, thanks to the paternal solicitude of the present governor, all these abject and corrupt

practices are about to disappear. A commercial tribunal, composed of three members sent from the capital, and three elected among the most respectable and intelligent merchants of the place, will reside in it, and take in their hands the distribution of order, hitherto banished from this new-born defenceless spot.

Yet these were not the only difficulties, which the honest and industrious merchant had to encounter, or the only essential matters which the sagacious magistrate had to regulate. How many heavy losses were too often sustained by individuals for want of means to insure their property. Such was the irregularity of the post, its slowness, and the total absence of every other conveyance, that very often letters were much longer in going to and coming from Brody,* than

* The first town on the frontiers of the German Emperor's dominion.

they are at present from the South of Italy; so that before orders for insuring a ship or a cargo were arrived at Triest, Leghorn, or Marseilles, her intermediate loss was sooner heard of by the way of Constantinople and Vienna. Now the letters from Brody are only three days and a half on the road; those from the centre of the German empire from 14 to 15; those from France and Italy seldom above 30 days. Besides this, the inconvenience attendant on the procuriug passports for the interior of the Russian dominions has totally disappeared, and the moment they have been scrutinized on the frontiers, one may go all over the empire without suffering the slightest interruption.

It now remained to destroy the most inveterate canker to trade—usury; so much more dangerous in this infant place, as, with the exception of a few houses, it is composed only of factors and brokers

with little or no stock, and that no kind of paper circulation or credit can be resorted to. You will hardly believe, Gentlemen, that some of these, disappointed of pecuniary remittances (the only ones they can make use of), have been obliged to pay the enormous interest of 5 and 6 per cent. a month on mortgages, in order to honour the contracts in which they were engaged, or make up the cargo of a ship lying in the port in expectation of it. To remedy this most calamitous evil, the town, with the solicitous interference of her tutelar patron, has solicited and obtained the establishment of a Loan-House, where the oppressed inhabitants will henceforth be supplied with cash, upon goods and other securities, at the lawful rate of one-half per cent. per month.

With so many natural advantages on one side, and such a profusion of blessings

on the other, you will hardly be surprised to hear, that a town, which, so late as two years ago, hardly contained 400 houses, scattered here and there, with about ten inhabitants each, one with another, is now more than doubled, both in size and population. The very ground, which at first was granted without the least retribution, by way of encouraging building, has already acquired an intrinsic value. Broad, perhaps too broad, streets are carefully planned out; public and private buildings rise on all sides with an amazing rapidity; every thing, in short, concurs to complete the satisfaction and happiness of the peaceful and industrious inhabitants of New Odessa; and many, whom interest, curiosity, or perhaps the too well-grounded fear of the convulsions of Europe, had at first momentarily drawn into it, finding now safety and protection for their persons and property, have

insensibly adopted and cherished a bounteous and plentiful country, which opens her motherly bosom to all sorts of arts and industry; and most cordially range themselves under the standard of the best, most generous of princes, who fully knows how to encourage and remunerate those who endeavour to alleviate the unhappy condition of some of their fellow-creatures, or to add to the enjoyments and felicity of others.

Pardon me, Gentlemen, if I have entered into these minute details. I am far from being insensible that, in respect to a long-standing place, they would at least be useless; but in regard to this new spot, they have appeared to me the less so, as they are in a manner connected with those accessary notions, which the profound and con-

templative speculator is far from disdaining.

I remain, Gentlemen,

With peculiar esteem and regard,

Your obedient humble servant,

J. H. SIEVRAC.

No. II.

DUTIES *paid by the British on Goods exported from, and imported into the Ottoman Empire.*

WHEREAS in the Imperial Capitulation firmly subsisting between the Court of Great Britain and the Ottoman Porte, and more especially in the first, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh articles of the said Capitulation, it is expressed and stipulated, that the English merchants and all under their banner, may safely and freely trade and negociate to and from the dominions of the Ottoman Porte, and throughout every part of those dominions by sea and by land, paying three aspers in the hundred for custom, and nothing more; and whereas, in the year 1794, a tariff was formed to serve as a permanent rule, by fixing the sums to be paid at the said rate for custom on

all such merchandize as the said merchants might and should import from their own and other foreign countries into Turkey, and on such as they should export and carry from Turkey into their own and other foreign countries for sale; and whereas, by reason of the increased prices of all commodities, the duties levied according to this tariff having fallen much below three per cent. the Court of Great Britain, in compliance with the desire of the Ottoman Porte, and in conformity to the anxious wishes it feels for the prosperity of the Ottoman Empire, did order a new tariff of customs to be constructed for the English merchants, which was accordingly done in April 1800, fixing the rates of the standard of three in the hundred according to the Imperial Capitulation; and whereas, his excellency the Right Honorable Charles Arbuthnot, Member of his Britannic Majety's Privy Council, and

his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Sublime Porte, has represented that the rates of certain articles in this new English tariff are higher than those paid by other Christian powers, and has asked that an alteration should be made in conformity to the sacred Capitulations, which stipulate that equal privileges should be enjoyed by England as are, or shall be, granted to the most favored nations.

In consequence whereof, and in virtue of an Imperial Firman issued to that effect, the rates of certain articles have been reduced and fixed, through the medium of Mr. Pisani, English dragoman, and of the English merchants on the one hand, and by his excellency Hassan Aga, Head Customer and one of the Imperial Chamberlains, on the other; and the list following in this book containing the said rates, and all that part of the tariff

settled in 1800 which has not been altered, has been signed and sealed to serve as a permanent rule. The arrears of the suspended payments to be settled after the terms of the present book, dating from the 29th October, 1801.

(L.S.) AHMED VASIF REIS EFENDI.
(L.S.) CHARLES ARBUTHNOT.

IMPORTS.

		Aspers.
Tin	per kintal	210
Lead	per ditto	45
Tin Plate	per case cont^{s} 225	75
Loaf sugar and sugar in powder	per kintal	120
Pepper	per oque	4
Shalloons	piece of 45 pikes	110
Cochineal	per oque	120
Farnaboug, "Dalbaiam portoral"	per kintal	180

	Aspers.
Item French or "Campechi".....per ditto.....	20
Item violet called St. Martha .....per ditto.....	72
Moca Coffee.....per oque.....	9
Item American.....per ditto.....	4
Ginger white and black per kintal	80
Amomum "Yeni bahar".....per oque.....	3
Cinnamon of Triest....per ditto	20
Item Dutch .....per ditto	36
India yarn .....per ditto	50
Cotton yarn from England.....per ditto	27
Muslins called Menghis, Agabanies, Mermer-i-hazine, Mermer-i-Humayoon, Kebir-Hassé, Bafta, and Sacan curi .....per piece.....	70
Rabbit skins, black and grey.....per parcel of 50..	150
Silver and metal watches per each.....	150
Gold ditto without diamonds .....per ditto.....	360
Clocks, common sort..per ditto	720
Table clocks, sopha, and repeaters, not set	

	Aspers.
in diamonds shall pay 3 per cent. on the invoice cost.	
Cloth called Shalli, Mahoots, and others, per piece of 25 pikes	420
Cloth called Londra, per piece of 25 ditto	160
Printed cloth called Basma shall pay 3 per cent. after a deduction of 20 per cent. on the invoice cost.	
Cutlery, glass ware, looking-glasses, and queen's ware shall pay 3 per cent. on the invoice cost.	
Shawl called Arca, per piece valued p^{r} 110	396
Item Zizecly and Bizai, do. valued p^{r} 200	720
Item called Beldary, per do. do. per 750	2700
Item called Bokcia, per do. do. per 60	216
Item do. Gianavery, per do. do. per 130	468
India muslins called Destar, fit for turbans, per piece valued per 50	180
Cloth called Sayaa, English fabric, fit for cloaks, shall pay 3 per cent. on the invoice cost.	
Indigo of America ....per oque.....	18
Item of India.....per ditto.....	18
Item of Lahoor.....per ditto.....	54
Verdigrease, Zendighiar, per ditto.....	12

	Aspers.
Mouhabet hani of India, per piece.....	120
Item, middle size.....per ditto	90
Item short.....per ditto	60
Sal ammoniac .....per oque	9
Gunpowder .....per kintal	150
Butter .....per ditto	70
Mouhabet hani, English fabric, per piece of 18 pikes.....	45

All military stores, say cordage, anchors, cannons, tar, pitch, and articles of that nature, shall pay at the rate of 3 per cent. at the market price, after deducting 30 per cent. from the net amount.

English pistols, guns, muskets, &c. shall pay 3 per cent. on the invoice cost.

Logwood, Indian and American .....per kintal	36
Rum .....per oque	2
English cheese .....per ditto.....	3
Shot .....per kintal.....	50
Musk .....per medcal	12
Ambergris .....per ditto	12
Nails of Christendom..per kintal 90	120

Precious stones, pearls, and watches set in diamonds, shall pay 2 per cent.

EXPORTS.

		Aspers.
Shagreen skins	per each	3
Bees wax	per kintal	240
Angora yarn	per oke	21
Goat's wool, or "Tiftie"	per ditto	21
Vitriol "Ghiouze tashi"	per ditto	4½
Alum	per kintal	27
Box wood	per ditto	8
Broussa silk	per oque	45
Bourre de soie	per kintal	30
Cottons	per ditto	100
Raw silk of Cyprus, Seyda, and neighbouring places	per oque	36
Valonea	per kintal	8
Yellow berries	per oque	2
Anniseed	per kintal	40
Gum arabic	per oque	6
"Asfoor" or	per kintal	130
Cotton yarn	per oque	9
Ditto red and coloured	per ditto	9
Figs	per kintal	15
Spunges, wet	per oque	6
Wallnut planks	per kintal	12

	Aspers.
Cypress ditto .....per ditto.....	20
Raisins .....per ditto.....	27
Currants, black fruit....per ditto.....	15
Madder root, " Ghiok boya" .....per ditto.....	45
Salep .....per oque.....	5
Gum adragant, " Kitra" per ditto.....	3
Raw silk of the Island and Rumelia.....per ditto.....	45
Hare skins of Constantinople .....per 100.....	60
Senna .....per oque.....	5
Mastick .....per ditto.....	11
Opium .....per ditto.....	36
Galls .....per kintal	150
Scammony, " Mahmoodié .....per oque.....	36
Copper .....per kintal	180
Coloquintida.....per oque.....	6

The English pound sterling shall be reckoned at 13 piastres, and the piastre at 120 aspers each.

All merchandize coming to the English

merchants from Europe, which is not inserted in this tariff, shall pay according to the rates specified in the Russian and German tariffs; and all articles which are expressed in no tariff whatever, and on which no rates are fixed, shall pay 3 per cent. after deducting 20 per cent. from the amount.

It is understood and stipulated that the whole of the preceding rates are to be levied at every scale and custom-house in the Ottoman Empire without exception, and that imperial firmans are to be issued to that effect to the different customers, in consequence whereof the present clause has been added.

Four exact copies of this tariff book have been made, signed, and sealed, whereof two have been delivered to his excellency the Reis Efendi, and the other two to the Right Honorable the

English Ambassador at Constantinople, the 21st Ramazaan, 1220, say Dec. 13, 1805.

(L.S.) B. PISANI,
English Interpreter.

(L.S.) HASSAN,
Chief Customer of Constantinople.

Salonica, Nov. 10, 1802.

A PROSPECTUS

OF THE

COMMERCE OF TOBACCO,

IN MACEDONIA.

BY FRANCIS CHARNAUD, ESQ.
Consul to the British Levant Company, Salonica.

---

3 Aspers ..... 1 Para.
40 Paras ..... 1 Piastres
15 to 17 Piastres, according to exchange, 1l. sterling.

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400 Drahen ..... 1 Oke.
44 Oke, equal 1 cwt. or English hundred weight.

No. III.

Commerce of Tobacco in Macedonia, from the sowing to the period of loading on board ships.

SOWING.

All kinds of tobaccos are sown in Macedonia in the month of March, and when favoured by the seasons, the tobacco is gathered in the month of August. The farmers begin by gathering the small leaves at the top of the plant.

DRYING.

The leaves which constitute the common tobacco are spread out, and dried in the fields, where they are gathered in the month of September, as are also those sorts called Carada and Yenige, but with

this difference, that they are selected from the common sorts, being strung on hempen strings, attached to rods, and exposed on the walls of the magazines and houses, where they are not so liable to be injured by the rain.

FORMING INTO MASSES.

In the month of October the villagers collect the leaves, and form them into masses; those of the common tobacco are tied together with thread by the lower extremity of the leaves, as are also the Yenige, but the Carada and Yolbashi are fastened with filaments of grass or herbs.

FORMING THE TOBACCO INTO BALES.

In the month of November they are formed into bales of equal weight, as well

the common tobaccos, as the Carada and Yolbashi, for the purpose of forming the cargo.

ENTRANCE OF THE TOBACCO INTO THE CITY.

In the months of November and December, the peasants begin daily to transport the tobacco from every village to Salonica. But the tobaccos which first enter are commonly those of the village called Strumza, and some of the small-leaved Carada, called Felix, and with little difference from one year to another. In the course of the month of May, the tobacco of every quality is already received and stored in the city, that being the period when the officers of the customs are changed, the possessors of tobacco are then forced by the custom-masters to bring them to an account.

DENOMINATION OF THE COMMON TOBACCOS.

The names of the common tobaccos are derived from the villages near which they are respectively cultivated, and are as follows—Petrice, Giardino, Curoa, Macrova, Drosova, Poroi, and others. The four first are most celebrated for their quality, and of these the Petrice, which has a large thick leaf, is preferred, though it sometimes happens that they are damaged by the weather.

CARRIAGE OF TOBACCO.

The tobacco is transported to the city by horses, mules, camels, and carts, according to the quality of the roads, and the distance; the hire of these varies from time to time.

QUANTITY OF TOBACCO, CALLED STRUMZA.

The harvest of tobacco, called Strumza, amounts to three or four thousand loads, of which the greatest part is transported to Bosnia, and other provinces of the Ottoman empire; 1000 or 1,500 loads are brought to Salonica, and from thence mostly exported for Alexandria, not being adapted to the European markets, or not received in them.

PRODUCT OF COMMON TOBACCOS.

The common tobaccos, comprising all qualities, are computed to produce, in good years, from 10 to 12,000 loads, and in bad years from 6000 to 8000.

CARADA.

Carada, Yolbashi, Paprava, and Felix are computed to produce, in good years, about 8000 loads.

YENIGE.

The small leaves of the Yenige tobacco are brought into the city in carts, made up into bales, and covered with white cloth of Salonica. The produce of these is 6000 bales, and they are sent, to the number of 4300 to the markets of Christendom, the rest to Constantinople, and other parts of this empire.

DUTIES ON COMMON TOBACCOS.

The load of common tobacco, composed of two large bales, entering into the

city, ought to weigh 110 okes, on which the common impost, taken without weighing, is 12 piastres, and 60 aspers per said load.

CARADA.

The load of Carada, Felix, Yolbashi, and Paprava, is in like manner composed of two bales, which commonly weigh together 120 okes; the duty paid thereon amounts to 14 piastres and 45 aspers the load.

YENIGE.

The Yenige being formed into bales, are weighed at the custom-house, and pay at the rate of 5 paras per oke duty.

There are other claims amounting to 11 paras for every load of tobacco, and

the same for every bale of Yenige, which are paid for the benefit of the servants of the custom-house and the gates.

The tobacco being brought into the magazines of the respective purchasers at the above-mentioned period, in December, the keeper of the magazine is obliged to visit them, and usually forms piles of two or four bales, one on another, of those which are in good condition, exposing those which are moistened to the air, and according as the season is moist or dry, he is obliged once or twice a week to shift the bales, and turn the leaves to prevent their heating, for which purpose the windows of the magazines are kept open.

PERIOD OF FORMING THE BALES.

In the course of the month of February, they form the bales, which are composed

each of the two packages, which forms a horse's or mule's load. Jews, experienced in the business, are employed to this operation, who examine the tobacco piece by piece, and separate the sound from the damaged, to prevent their growing lighter by remaining in the stores.

PERIOD OF PRESSING THE CARADA, &c.

The Carada, Yolbashi, Felix, and Paprava, being brought to the magazines ready embaled, require nothing but to be properly arranged in the magazines, and compressed like the others. It is not usual to go through the same process with them as with the common tobacco; but when it is performed, the same kinds are not usually put on board ships till the month of May or June, being more liable to ferment than others.

THE YENIGE.

The Yenige tobaccos, after being placed in the magazines, and turned upside down by the use of the lever, are compressed like the others, and afterwards tied with cords, and when put on board, the captain is cautioned not to steive them, as from their lightness that operation would reduce them to powder. Generally, they do not put the tobaccos on ship-board till the end of March or the beginning of April, to prevent their fermenting when on board.

OF LOSS OF WEIGHT.

Every kind of tobacco, from the time of its entrance into the magazine to that of loading on board ships, is calculated to lose from 10 to 15 per cent. of its original weight, which loss is necessarily to be

be allowed for fixing the price, as well as the refuse tobacco, which is separated from the sound, and exported to the markets of Christendom, and being unfit for sale any where else, is usually sent to Egypt.

PERIOD FOR FIXING THE PRICE OF TOBACCO.

According to the ancient custom, the price of every quality of tobacco is fixed in the presence of the Doganier in the month of November, but this holds only with respect to the common sorts, and is a mere formality with respect to the other kinds, being defeated by persons who are short of the commodity, or those houses who desire a choice of tobacco; and the price augmenting by the large commissions of the Apalto at Milano, where only Carada and Yenige of the most perfect quality, and of a yellow colour, are received.

The tobaccos are grilled or pressed a second time, just before they are embarked. It was formerly done on board, but this has since been forbidden, the captains having abused the custom by pressing them too much, in order to have room to store a greater quantity, by which they gained 20 or more per cent.

PERIOD OF COMMISSIONS.

The period for orders of commissions for every kind of tobaccos from different parts of Christendom is the months of November and December; remittances are made in advance for a part, and afterwards for the liquidation of the contract by every courier.

PAYMENTS TO THE CUSTOM-HOUSE.

Formerly these were made at the con-

veniency of the merchant, who was never pressed for the duties, by which he was a great gainer; but now the customs are rigorously collected, and all must be paid before the ship sails. Nay, sometimes duties are paid in advance to the custom-master, a habit introduced by the imprudence and ambition of some European merchants.

Approximation of the quantity of Tobacco gathered, in good years, from the villages of Macedonia, viz.

Loads in two ballots, each	3,000,	reduced to bales,	3,000
Ditto of common, of every quality	13,000	.....	13,000
Ditto of Carada, Felix, Yolbashi, & Paprava	8,000	.....	16,000
Yenige	—	.....	6,000
Total Loads	24,000	Bales	38,000

Exportation of Tobacco made to Alexandria, on the average of different years, viz.

Bales 2,000 called Strumza Leaves.
Ditto 10,000 common of every kind, and much refuse.
Ditto 3,000 Carada, Yolbashi, and refuse of these.

Bales 15,000 Total for Alexandria.

Quantity of Tobacco exported from Salonica for Satalia, by Albinian and Bosniak Supercargoes, who bring their funds to make their purchases.

Bales 1,200 called Strumza Leaves.
Ditto 1,000 common of every quality.
Ditto 800 Carada and Yolbashi.

Bales 3,000 for Satalia.

N.B. This is all picked merchandise selected by the supercargoes.

RIGHT OF BEDEAT.

For Alexandria, Satalia, and other places of the Ottoman Empire, the right of

Bedeat is only 20-40 for every load of 44 okes.

Approximation of the quantity of Tobaccos of all qualities, exported in the year, for the following places:

		Bales.
Carada.....	6,000	for Milano.
Yenige	2,000	
Common	500	for Genoa.
Carada	2,000	
Yenige.....	200	
Common	1,500	for Leghorn.
Carada.....	600	
Yenige	200	
Carada	500	for Venice.
Yenige.....	100	
Carada	600	for Triest.
Yenige.....	300	
Yenige.....	1,500	for Vienna.
Common	800	for Trento.
Carada	300	
Of different qualities	2,900	for Constantinople and Salonica.

Total Bales 20,000 of every quality.

RECAPITULATION.

	Bales.
For Alexandria	15,000
For Satalia	3,000
For Milano	8,000
For Genoa	2 700
For Leghorn	2,300
For Venice	600
For Triest	900
For Vienna	1,500
For Trento	1,100
For Constantinople and Salonica	2,900
Total	38,000

FIRST COST OF TOBACCOS.

13,000 loads common Tobacco, at 10-120 per oke	119,166
3,000 ditto Strumitza, at 1-120 per oke	39,000
8,000 ditto Canada, at 27 per load	216,000
6,000 bales Yenige, at 22-40 per oke	247,500
Primitive Price	621,666

CUSTOM-HOUSE DUTIES ON THE ABOVE TOBACCOS.

13,000	loads common Tobacco, at 12½	P. 162,500
3,000	ditto Strumza, at 12½ per load	37,500
8,000	ditto Carada, at 14P. 45-120 per load	115,000
6,000	bales Yenige, at 5-40 per oke, every bale weighing 75 okes	56,250
	Amount of Customs	371,250

BEDEAT DUTY.

		P.
On 14,000	bales commons for Turkey, each bale weighing 99 okes, at 20-40 per 44 okes	15,750
2,000	ditto ditto for Christendom, every bale weighing 95 okes, at 2-40 per oke.....	9,500
3,800	ditto Carada, for Turkey, each bale weighing 50 okes, at 20-40 per kl.	2,160
12,200	ditto ditto for Christendom (as above) at 2-40	30,500
1,500	ditto of Yenige for Turkey, every bale weighing 70 okes, at 20-40 per kl.	1,198
4,500	ditto ditto for Christendom (as above) at 2-40 per oke	15,750
38,000	Bales	Amount of Bedeat 74,853

Upon moderate estimation, the carriage of 38,000 bales, equal to 24,000 loads, at P.2½, including petty expenses, amount to	P. 60,000

RECAPITULATION.

The amount of first cost	P. 621,666
amount of Custom	371,250
amount of Bedeat.....	74,853
amount of Carriage	60,000
	1,127,769

Thus the sum in circulation, for the primitive purchase, and other charges as above specified, of this commerce, amount to one million, one hundred and twenty-seven thousand, seven hundred and sixty-nine Turkish dollars per annum.

OF THE TOBACCO WHICH IS USED IN THE PLACE.

There are also various sorts of small leaved, fine Tobacco, of which little goes

out of the market of Salonica, they being consumed on the spot. These are brought from the villages in packets covered with a fine white cotton cloth, and commonly weigh each 4, 6, 8, to 10 okes; they are of different qualities, and the price from 30 paras to 4 piastres the oke.

PERIOD OF THE CAPARO, OR ADVANCES OF MONEY.

Those who would make considerable profit in the trade of tobacco, must necessarily consent to hazard considerable sums of money in advances. The beginning of these advances is commonly made at the time of sowing, and the proprietors are indiscreet enough continually to demand similar advances, till the time when the tobaccos are all lodged in the city; so that for the most part they remain debtors till the next year, and so on from year to year. Sometimes too, they are

so dishonest that nothing more is received from them after these advances have been made, than some loads of the worst quality, which can be sold only for refuse. It is of consequence clear, that a branch of commerce in which so many risks, so much anxiety, and so much fatigue are combined, should be attended with a considerable profit. Accordingly it is found that those who trade in the market on their own account, make a clear profit of 15 to 20 piastres on every load: but not so those merchants, who executing commissions for their friends, are obliged to confine themselves to a particular quality of tobacco, for which they pay an higher price; and in consequence, the risk to which persons in this situation are exposed, is not balanced by the profit they can expect or hope for.

N.B. It is further to be remarked, that of late years the quantity of tobaccos cul-

tivated in Macedonia has been gradually decreasing, and that it is at present perhaps, nearly one third less than formerly. This decrease was observed after the last war between the Porte and Russia, and it is attributed to the distresses occasioned to the peasantry, by the levy of troops and exorbitant demands of money. The evil has been augmented by the late invasion of Egypt, which precluded the sale of tobacco in that country, and thus discouraged the cultivators, by diminishing the culture: their lands are since partly converted to other purposes.

THE END.

C. Squire, Printer,
Furnival's Inn Court.

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